

THE
MEMOIRS
OF A

Young Lady of Quality,

A

PLATONIST.

VOL. I.

*Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.*



L O N D O N:
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THE
MEMOIRS

OF A
Young Lady of Quality.

PART I.

To the PRINCESS *of ***.*



WHILST I live, your Highness
may always depend upon my
most respectful Friendship; but
what I am now doing, will be
the sincerest Proof of my invio-
lable Attachment: I am writing the Me-
moirs of my Life for your Perusal. Had
I not the most grateful Sense of your ex-

B

treme

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treme Goodness, and been thoroughly convinced of your great Prudence and Discretion, no Consideration could have prevailed upon me, to disclose such Secrets, as ought to have been eternally buried in Oblivion. But who can refuse such bewitching Intreaties? How irresistible when they come from a Person so revered! And in the last Place, Gratitude for the Favours you have so lately honoured me with, require an absolute Submission to your Commands; and I should be most ungrateful, did I refuse on any Pretence whatsoever; in Obedience therefore to your Commands, since you have the Curiosity to know my History, here you have it; allow me only to suppress such Names as are well known in the World, and which I would not risque exposing on any Account. I send you the Manuscript by a safe Hand, and desire you would commit the Key to the Flames the Moment you have satisfied your Curiosity. It would be lessening the great Veneration I have for you, to shew any further Inquietude about it, as I should regret being suspected of the least Distrust. No one knows better than your Highness, the great Value we ought to set upon that Jewel Reputation. The Proofs you are daily giving me of your Friendship, will make me easy on that Head. One Word more, if you please. Permit me to remind you,
of

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of the solemn Promise you exacted from me at Parting, to conceal nothing, not even any of those Foibles which cost a young Girl so dear, and which she never reveals, but with the utmost Reluctance. You may remember also, that in order to engage me in this Affair, you made me your Confident, as a Guarantee for my Confidence, as well as the Trust I ought to repose in you; and I flatter myself I shall make such an Use of it, as not to incur your Displeasure for this authentic Mark of my Friendship. Read Princess, read—I hope you will have no real Cause to reproach me.

One-day as I was preparing to go to the Opera, with my Mother, she came into my Apartment, and ordered the Servant, who was dressing me, to leave the Room. *Agnes*, said she, we must think no more of Pleasures. I have a Secret to impart, of the utmost Consequence, and which you ought, from this very Moment, seriously to reflect upon. *M. de St. Preuil* is just gone to *Versailles*, and it greatly behoves me to take Advantage of his Absence. When he returns, what will become of me I know not! and it would distract me, should I have Reason to repent my not making Use of this Opportunity, which Heaven now undoubtedly affords me, to inform you of our Misfortunes. My Husband comes back To-night; alas! can I flatter myself with

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any Hopes you will have a Mother To-morrow? It would certainly be the highest Imprudence, to neglect this precious Moment. As I am fearful, I may never see you again, I must not defer, to relate a Tale of the utmost Importance for you to know.

I could hardly give Madam *de St. Preuil* Time to finish these Words. I threw myself about her Neck, I hugged her in my Arms, and wept most bitterly. Silence, my Child, said she, returning my Caresses, endeavour to stifle your Tears and Tenderness; see if the Antichamber-door be fast; bolt this, and sit down close by me, I shall talk very low, and be you very attentive. I obeyed her, endeavouring to moderate my Grief, and sat down on a Settee, against which my Mother was leaning weeping. After fixing her Eyes attentively upon me, she fetched a deep Sigh, and began to make me the Confident of her melancholy Secrets.

You know, my Child, to what a Degree my Husband loves me, and how abominably jealous he is. I married him without the least Inclination, and was dragged as a Victim to the Altar, a Sacrifice to Interest. My heart was unfortunately engaged to the Marquis *de Breville*; nor could I possibly forget him, even after Marriage. It was not long, before M. *de St. Preuil* found it out; and this Knowledge made him treat me

me with unexampled Severity; he never stirred a Step from me, when his Duty would permit him to stay at Home; and the Moment he was obliged to attend the Court, an old Woman (whose Poverty made her dependant on him) was set as a Guard over me; and when that happened, I became the most unhappy Creature in the World.

At the same Time, my Husband was endeavouring, by all the Ways and Means he possibly could invent, to engage a Heart which had ever been averse to him, and was every Day made more and more so by his ill Treatment, the Marquis *de Breville* was contriving an Opportunity to see me, and talk to me; more than twelve Months passed before he could accomplish his Endeavours.

I began to imagine he had entirely forgot me; and was ruminating upon it one Day while I was in the Country, when behold, from a Terrass where I was walking, I spied a Peasant, as I thought, scaling the Wall of the Park. I was ready to cry out, in order to alarm the Servants, and tell them, a Thief was coming to rob the House; but upon the Man's waving his Hat, when he had got into the Park, prevented me, tho' I could not tell why or wherefore.

A Notion possessed me on a sudden, that this Peasant had something interesting to say to me; nor could I help observing him in a

particular Manner, which he perceived. He looked very circumspectly round about on every Side, to see if I was alone; by-and-by he came creeping along the Bottom of an Espallier Hedge, and at once presented himself to me.

What I suspected, my dear Child, proved but too true. Before this Man could open his Mouth, I knew him to be the Marquis *de Breville*, my dear Lover, whom I found had not forgot me. To what do you expose me, said I to him very low, my Husband now sleeps in that Arbor within four Paces of us. If he should wake and surprize us, or but suspect it is you, neither your Disguise, nor your Presence of Mind, will avail you any thing; we shall be absolutely undone both of us. *M. de St. Preuil* is jealous to Distraction, that you cannot be ignorant of: How could you then have so little Regard for me, to expose me in this Manner? *Breville*, without making one Word of Answer, stole a Letter into my Hand, then putting his Finger upon his Mouth, and saluting me most respectfully with his Eyes, hastened to the Bottom of the Garden, and disappeared.

I very carefully concealed this fatal Billet, and after meditating a few Moments, what Method I should take to satisfy my Curiosity, retired into the most secret Part of the Garden, and opened it. Would you think it,

it, my dear Child? He intreated me to give him a Meeting, and, besides using the most pressing Instances to grant his Request, the cruel Creature threatened, in case I had the Barbarity to refuse, he would stab himself before my Face. I trembled at the Alternative; I was extremely terrified at the Thoughts both of the one and the other. The Inclination I had towards *Breville*, or to say rather the Barbarity of my Husband, inclined me to grant the desired Favour. It would be of little Signification to tell you the Methods we took to see each other; alas! you will but too soon be informed of that.

We enjoyed more than eight Days entirely, those fatal Interviews of Delight. The Freedom of the Country afforded us frequent Opportunities; besides, *M. de St. Preuil* was drinking the Waters, and had a separate Apartment. In short, it seemed as if every-thing conspired to facilitate my Lover's Intrigue.

The Death of my Husband's Brother, obliged us to return to *Paris*, which interrupted our Commerce. This threw my Lover into Despair, who at parting told me, he should wait my Return into the Country, with an Impatience not to be expressed.

Three Months after what I have told you, I found myself pregnant.—I trembled at

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this Discovery—You must know, *M. de St. Preuil* had been ill for above six Months, and drinking the Waters more than three—He was no Dupe, I had not the least room to hope therefore, in case he perceived it, that he would give me any Quarter.

I was so shocked at these Reflections, that I added Indiscretion to my Ill-conduct. With a Torrent of Tears I confided my Misfortunes to a favourite Chambermaid; who, far from pitying me, or seeming any-wise concerned, only laughed, and said, I was to blame to afflict myself for so trifling an Accident, as almost every Day's Experience affords us Instances of, and that she would undertake to manage Matters so, it should never be talked of.

The plain, artless Manner, in which this Girl undertook to console me, helped a little to compose my troubled Mind. The first Thing she insisted upon, was, to go immediately and find out my Husband, to entertain him, to caress him, to endeavour to put him into such a Situation, he should have no farther Occasion to continue the Regimen prescribed by his Physicians. This was a very hard Task for me to perform. I am naturally cold, and was always so towards him; however, being very sensible of the Consequence of this Girl's Advice, I forced myself to follow it, and it succeeded to Admiration. *M. de St. Preuil*, over-joyed

joyed at this surprizing Change in my Behaviour, attributed it all to his dear self, fancying he had inspired me with this Alteration, and began from that very Moment to behave in a quite different Manner to what he had ever done before.

When my Chambermaid (who was the Person employed to inform him of my Pregnancy) told him of it, he did not appear the least surprized at the News, he gloried in it to all the World; the Physician did the same, and what was very singular, his Reputation was greatly benefited by it, so much, that whatever Person of Condition wanted an Heir to his Estate, came to this Doctor for his Advice, and he was called, by Way of Eminence, the Great Doctor. The Waters, also which had been neglected for some Time, gained great Reputation; most Husbands drank of them, and many pretended great Benefit from their prolific Quality.

I was at the usual Time delivered of a Girl, which was you, *Agnes*. What, Madam, said I, interrupting her, greatly afflicted; to find that I am that unfortunate Child, will make me sufficiently miserable. My Dear, continued Madam *de St. Preuil*, you should have been Ignorant of it for ever, had I not been under the cruel Necessity of discovering it to you. Moderate your Grief, for I have a great deal more to disclose. The

Risque I had ran of being ruined, continued my Mother, caused me to make some solid Reflections, besides, my Husband grew very suspicious; upon considering with myself, therefore, I determined never to have any Manner of Commerce with *Breville* for the Time to come. I wrote to him by my Chambermaid, and he behaved like a Man of Honour, ever after forbearing all Sort of Correspondence with me. It was high Time now to think of nothing else but doing my Duty, and that the only private Satisfaction I could make my Husband for that great Abuse, was to do all in my Power to love and oblige him. This Conduct succeeded, and made him in Return more amorously fond of me than ever.

After two Years more, I brought your Brothers into the World. Being entirely recovered of this Bagatelle, I was afterwards chiefly employed in your Education and theirs, having great Reason to hope I should never have Cause to be under any Apprehension for the Misfortune which had befallen me: Fourteen Years are passed since that Time; but, alas! I have just learned, that Heaven never suffers such Crimes to go unpunished.

That Chambermaid, in whom I had reposed such Confidence, about a Year after, went from me to be married. I rejoiced at her Departure, as the Sight of her always
gave

gave me Uneasiness ; her Presence seemed a tacit Reproach of my Disgrace.

When she left me, I gave her privately many considerable Presents ; I gave her my Jewels, and told my Husband I had lost them. I flattered myself, that by my extravagant Generosity, my unhappy Adventure would never be called in Question ; and I am sure, I never expected what has now happened. You remember, my Child, M. *de St. Preuil* told us last Night he should go this Morning to *Versailles*, and when he was gone, we had nothing to do but prepare for the Opera, that he would come back after Dinner, and take us along with him. He went into his Closet this Morning, to fetch some Papers, as I imagined ; and I expected he would, according to Custom, return into my Room before he departed ; you know I had sent you into your's to dress at that Time ; but M. *de St. Preuil* stepped directly into his Chaise without bidding me Adieu. Surprized, to the last Degree, when I heard the Wheels rattle ; I rose up instantly, and went to the Casement, to see if I was mistaken or not, but I had no Reason to doubt about it, when I met one of his Servants, who brought me a Pacquet from him. I trembled without being able to guess the Cause. I was far from imagining an Event so unforeseen. Read, read, *Agnes*, cry'd my Mother, pulling a Paper out of her

Bosom, and giving it to me. After what I have told you, that Letter is sufficient to convince you of my secret Terror, and that it is but too justly grounded.

I opened the Billet with a trembling Hand, and found only the following Words.

B I L L E T.

“ **H** E R E are the Diamonds, Madam,
 “ which I gave you, and which you
 “ had lost. After so long a Time, they
 “ are found, and brought to me again.
 “ Shall you be as happy as I? Shall you
 “ find what you have lost? Come to me
 “ this Evening in my Closet, there we will
 “ talk together.”

Think you, my Child, continued my Mother, (unable to refrain from Tears) there are any Hopes after such an Adventure? This cruel Chambermaid has certainly discovered it. These Words, Shall you be so happy as I? Shall you find what you have lost? must certainly mean my Honor. After this, how dare I appear before *M. de St. Preuil*? Is it possible for me to justify myself? If I should even pretend to deny it all, my astonished Countenance, my down-cast Eyes, which I dare not lift up to look on his; all, all would betray me. I partook of my Mother's Grief, and said all I could to assuage it as much as possible. I asked
 her

her if she would expose herself to the Rage and Resentment of *M. de St. Preuil*, whom I durst not call Father any more? What would you have me do, said she? I have nothing; this enraged, injured Husband, took me with nothing. If I fly from him, what will become of me? How can I pretend to justify my Crimes, to my own Family, or to the World? How can I support myself? If I had brought him a Fortune, I could, as many others do in the like Circumstances, commence a Suit on some plausible Pretence or other, founded on the Laws of Matrimony; so that I should have nothing to fear from my Husband's Rage in Respect to you. But, *Agnes*, I am without a Subsistence, or even any Hopes of one. I have nothing to do but wait the Storm, now hanging over my Head, ready to burst. I am resigned—But as it is possible we may be separated, I thought it advisable to inform you the Cause of it, that my fatal Example might make such an Impression on your Heart, as to prevent your ever falling into so shocking a Dilemma, as you now see me in. Immediately after she had said this, she rose up, and bid me follow her into her Closet, where she took up a Casket, and put into my Hands, telling me it contained a thousand Crowns; she had saved out of her Pocket Expences, she gave me also the Picture of him who had been the fatal Cause of her Misfortunes;

Misfortunes ; it is your Father, said she, he will one Day be rich ; and in Case I die, and you should be abandoned by *M. de St. Preuil*, he will know you upon shewing him his Picture ; this was agreed upon by us. Behold, my dear *Agnes*, this is all I am able to do for you at present. If Heaven permits our Affairs to take a more favourable Turn, I will, to the utmost of my Power, endeavour to provide such an Establishment for you, as shall make you independant, let what will happen hereafter. This Discourse pierced my very Heart, and made me dissolve in Tears. No, no, my dear Mamma, cry'd I, I will not leave you, we will never more be separated, however barbarously *M. de St. Preuil* may behave ; I will endeavour to move him by my Tears, at least he shall not prevent me the fatal Pleasure of accompanying you, even to your Grave. Forbear, my Dear, it is too moving, said my Mother ; in the Situation I am in, I shall have Occasion to summon all my Resolution, I must look the Misfortunes which threaten me full in the Face. Well, continued I, suffer me to partake with you, I must have a Share in all your Afflictions, I love you more than Life, allow me to mingle my Tears with yours. When *M. de St. Preuil* comes, he shall find me prostrate at your Feet, I will endeavour to soften him, Heaven it may be will inspire me. The Gentleman, your Husband, always seemed fond of me.

Who

Who knows? Things may not be so desperate as we imagine. But, said I again, a Thought is just come into my Head. What if we go to that Chambermaid, who is suspected of this Indiscretion. We have Time enough—*M. de St. Preuil* is not expected Home till Night, and 'tis now but Three o'Clock, we shall be back before he arrives. This little Journey will amuse us, let your Tears be dried up, and you will recover your Looks before we get there. If you should alarm yourself unadvisedly, and discover to *M. de St. Preuil* a Thing he may be ignorant of, the having taken so imprudent a Step, would be an Action to reproach yourself with the longest Day of your Life. What I was now saying, seemed as if my good Genius had whisper'd in my Ear. I could not desist, but persevered, after I had opened on this Head, with greater Earnestness than ever I did on any Subject before.

My Mother seemed struck with this Piece of Advice. Ring the Bell, said she, and let us order the Horses to the Coach immediately. I rose directly to do as she ordered. Stop, said she, we will make as if we were going to the next Church, and find some Pretence for sending back our Servants, and desire the first Person we meet to call us a Hackney-Coach, and make our Visit in that Manner. It is proper to keep our Journey a Secret, for Fear of what may happen.

happen. I apprehended what Madam *de St. Preuil's* private Reasons were, and we executed our Scheme as she proposed.

As soon as we arrived at the Chambermaid's Habitation, my Mother sent the Coachman's Boy to enquire if she was at Home, and if we could see her; he returned immediately after, and said she was coming to us. My Heart akes terribly, said Madam *de St. Preuil*, which is certainly a very bad Omen. I did whatever I could to keep up her Spirits, and lent her my Arm out of the Coach. The Chambermaid came running to meet us, crying out. I had a good Opinion of her Manner of crying out, for it shewed a great deal of Joy, not like a dismal Sentence of Condemnation. Courage, said I aside, to Madam *de St. Preuil*; I am persuaded you will go from this Place much easier in your Mind than you came to it. My Mother sighed, without making me any Answer, but it was not a very deep Sigh, only what dilated the Heart a little, and gave Ease to the Pressure it was under before. For my Part, I apprehended much Consolation; and said to myself, we are going to be perfectly at Ease again. One is sometimes possessed with a Spirit of Divination, which I have experienced on several Occasions.

The Moment the Chambermaid joined us, she kissed my Mother's Hand, she took hold

hold of her Arm, and said, she was greatly honored to see her ; then turning to me, with an Air of great Surprize, asked my Mother, if I was Miss *Agnes*. Oh, Goodness ! cry'd she, after *Madam de St. Preuil* had answered her, how tall she is grown, and how handsome ; What a prodigious Alteration four Years have made ? She was in the right ; for at ten Years of Age I seemed but homely ; and at twelve there appeared very little Hopes of any Alteration for the better ; but then my Features began to alter ; and this surprizing Change was occasioned by getting the better of a long Disorder I had had, that when I arrived to the Age of fourteen, I was grown so handsome, I might vie with any one of my Years for Beauty. It is not indeed so much out of Self-love, as to justify this Woman's Surprize, that I give a Loose to this little Touch of Vanity. If I have done amiss, my Princess, I ask Pardon, and promise for the future to be more Circumspect, and speak more modestly of myself. We were entertained with such Sort of Chit-chat as this while we were walking into the House ; when we were seated, she would not give my Mother Leave to mention our Errand, but immediately began to talk of her Husband, telling us how uneasy he made her, of his loose disorderly Conduct, and what a Misfortune it was for a young Person to give Way to her Inclinations, then
left

left off, for a Moment, what regarded herself, to advise me not to follow the Dictates of my Heart in the Choice of a Husband; and added many Maxims on the Subject, which it would not be worth my while to repeat here. She afterwards returned to her own Family again, boasting of the Sweetness of a Daughter she had; then wept for the Loss of her eldest Son, who, she said, was a Prodigy at four Years old, and was killed by a Fall out of a Window. After spending half an Hour in such trifling Tales, she took us into her own Room, and would make us look at all her Conveniences; she opened her Chest of Drawers, and gave us an Inventory of her Wardrobe; and at every new Piece she shewed us, she exclaimed, alas! I had a great many more, but my Rogue of a Husband, has made away with one half of them, but I keep the rest under Lock and Key, and I will perish sooner than suffer myself to be led by the Nose for the future. I have been too good to him; however, since I have plucked up my Spirit a little, he dare not meddle with me; good Faith, if he did, I'd make him know who he had to deal with.

As I observed, *Louison* (for that was the Girl's Name) did not intend very soon to finish her Discourse, and that our Time wasted apace. I made a Sign to *Madam de St. Preuil*, which she understood, and with

with a Sigh cry'd out, so, so, *Louison*, let us talk of something else, I am come on purpose to have a little private Discourse with you, my Time is but short, let us do it freely, but so as not to be interrupted.

The Chambermaid immediately put her Things into her Drawers again, and advised us to go into a little Closet she had shewn us before, and there, she said, we should be private. We followed her in, and she fastened the Door. She prevented my Mother, by assuring her, whatever it was she wanted to be informed of, she was absolutely attached to her, even to Death, and hoped she would be convinced, by now submitting entirely to her Disposal, that she was not unworthy the many Favours they had honoured her with.

Madam de St. Preuil interrupted her, while she was making these Protestations, by asking her, if she never imparted the Secret of my Birth to any one? I would sooner lose my Life, replied this Girl with some Warmth. What Madam! cried she, lifting up her Hands to Heaven with most horrid Asseverations, do you think, after the Obligations I am under, I could be capable of such a thing? — No, continued my Mother, I ever thought you faithful; but an Accident has lately happened with regard to *M. de St. Preuil*; I am thrown in-
to

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to a most frightful Embarrassment, out of which none but you can extricate me.

My Mother then shewed the Chambermaid the Letter I mentioned before. The Girl reddened very much ; and softening her Voice, said, Madam, when was this Letter wrote ? To-day, replied my Mother, trembling (having observed *Louison* change Colour) Why do you ask me that Question ? Tell me sincerely, added she, casting a Look at me, for you give me a most inexpressible Uneasiness.

The Chambermaid paused for a Minute ; and then assured Madam *de St. Preuil*, she had no Reason to make herself uneasy about this Adventure. What you tell me, said my Mother (interrupting her with some Warmth) does not afford me the least Consolation, I see plainly you have spoke of it, and I am ruined past Redemption, if you conceal it any longer from me.

These Words were spoke with that Air of Authority, they had the desired Effect. *Louison* threw herself at my Mother's Feet, and fell a crying. Well ! my Secret is divulged, said Madam *de St. Preuil*, greatly troubled. I was but too apprehensive of it. Tell me then the Circumstances of my Misfortune. Alas ! I mistrusted it all-along, added she, casting a wishful Look at me, which almost melted me into Tears, M. *de St.*

St. Preuil is informed, I am ruined ; it will be in vain to dissemble any longer.

If he is informed, replied *Louison*, wiping her Eyes, I swear to you again, Madam, it is not from me ; in short, if it is discovered, it must be by a most wicked Person, who has betrayed the most sacred Thing in our Religion. Please to hearken to me a little, and I am persuaded, after the Relation I shall make, you will be better satisfied, and not blame me.

We were exceeding careful not to interrupt her, being very eager to hear the fatal History she had promised us. We placed ourselves close by *Louison*, who expressed herself in the following Manner.

About three Years ago, continued she, I fell sick, and was at the Point of Death ; when my Father Confessor came, and told me, my Physician had given me over ; and that I ought to think of nothing but my Salvation. This terrible Denunciation shocked me ; for I was always greatly terrified at the Thoughts of Death. I begged his Assistance, to put me in a Condition to perform this great Work, and promised to deliver myself up absolutely to his ghostly Council and Advice. He brought me to a general Confession, till which Time I had never been at the Tribunal of the Penitence du Secret, since the Birth of Miss *Agnes*, on which Account I had a Scruple of Conscience ; and
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without declaring the Nature of it, I asked my Confessor, if I was privy to a Sin committed by another, was I obliged to reveal it? My too zealous Director declared in the Affirmative. He wound me about in such a Manner, and frightened me so with the Torments of Hell, besides, the Idea I had that the Tribunal of Penitence was a Well, from whence nothing ever came out, that I related the whole Matter of Fact; and the Terror I was in made me so imprudent, as to discover even the Names. He pronounced my receiving the Jewels a great Crime; and said, I could not keep them, without risking my Salvation; and for this Reason, because it was a Sort of Premium, which made me an Accomplice with my Mistress; that I was an Instrument in bringing a Child into a Family, which, contrary to all Laws, could not partake the Inheritance of those which were legitimate; that it would be a manifest Robbery; and that I should be made to answer for it before Heaven. I desired to know what Atonement I should make. You must first, said he, give me the Jewels to return, which I shall make a proper Use of; and you must promise me, if you should be so happy as to recover, to go and find out the Lady, and engage her to endeavour to inspire this supposed Child of her Husband with an Inclination for the Convent; but, if she cannot do that, to provide for her,
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so that she may not wrong her Brothers. If your late Mistress despises your Advice, you must threaten to tell her Husband what has happened; and if it should be necessary, not only threaten, but actually do it: However, if Matters are brought to this Extremity, you must observe a great deal of Prudence in a Case so delicate, and make the Report in as favourable Circumstances as possible, so as to give no Scandal or Trouble to the Family; for if unfortunately you should, you would become answerable for all the Misfortunes which might attend it, and may be very severely punished for it in the next World.

What could I oppose to these Reasons, which seemed so well grounded, and which came so powerfully out of the Mouth of a Person, who was for that Quarter of an Hour my Judge, and the Arbiter of my eternal Fate? I submitted to every Thing he required of me; I promised to do whatever he proposed; I gave up my Diamonds; happy for me, I thought, they were not sold. What would I not have done to avoid the Torments of Hell, with which I was threatened? I would have sacrificed all, and every Thing I had in this World on that Account.

The Doctors were mistaken this Time; an innocent Medicine restored my Health. I was scarcely recovered, before I had forgot
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the Promises I made my Director. Ever since that Time, continued *Louison*, I never heard it spoke of. I have Reason to suspect, this unexpected Accident which has happened, must come from my Confessor; and if that is the Case, he is a Monster, who ought to be severely punished, to deter such People from divulging the Secrets they are intrusted with; or else, no one would care to reveal all their private Actions to them.

This last Reflection did not afford us the least Comfort for the Chambermaid's Indiscretion; my Mother, on the contrary, found herself more uneasy than ever. Before this Detail, she had some flattering Hopes, tho' small; but now, there was not the least Doubt the Secret must have transpired: We deliberated some Time, what Course to take. *Louison* was of Opinion, it would be best to go immediately, and find out her Director; and if possible, learn from his own Mouth, how this Secret came to be disclosed. However mortifying this Visit was to my Mother, we made it, unable in our present Situation to think of a better Method of proceeding.

Louison conducted us to this Ecclesiastic. At his Door we were told he was dying, and saw no-body. We were about to turn back, much chagrined at this unexpected Accident, which threw us into our first Perplexity; when a Priest came up, and asked us

our Names, and what we wanted. *Louison* told him, our Business was an important Secret, and absolutely necessary that the sick Man should know. This Message determined the Priest, who assured us, he would immediately go and use his Endeavours that we might be introduced. He returned a Moment after, and conducted us into the dying Man's Chamber.

What a Spectacle was here, my Princess! that of a Man whose Soul was just leaving his Body; but, I shall omit giving you the Description; such Objects are very frightful, fill us with melancholy, gloomy Thoughts, and the Impressions they leave on the Mind are not easily effaced; for my own Part, I was excessively shocked.

We agreed, that *Louison* should talk to her Director; she therefore got close to his Ear, and told him the Business she and *Madam de St. Preuil* were come upon. I have done no more than my Duty, said the sick Man, in a low, faint Voice, which was a Presage of his speedy Dissolution; I kept the Diamonds with a Design to have returned them myself, and made a Pretence, that they had been stolen; my Design was also to advise *M. de St. Preuil* to make his Will in Favour of his Sons, and to leave the Child, which passed for his Daughter, but just enough for her Subsistence. I had thought of a Method to accomplish this Design,

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without discovering the Lady's Secret, but, Heaven would not permit me to acquit myself of this religious Duty, having been confined to my Bed for these last three Years past, and was in Hopes, sooner or later, of getting Abroad, so that I did not determine till Yesterday, what I did to Day. The just Apprehension I was under of leaving this World, without being able to perform what I intended, determined me at once. I sent to my Confessor, who, if he punctually observed my Instructions, *M. de St. Preuil's* Lady, need not be under any Sort of Uneasiness; she would be to blame to confess any-Thing; and, if the Zeal of my Director, has carried him too far, I pray Heaven to give him Grace, and to pardon all our Offences. He could say no more, but desire us to retire, that he might not be disturbed, he said, in those few precious Moments he had left to implore the divine Mercy. As we could not possibly learn any more of him, we took our Leave, and at going out, desired to know who this Priest's Director was, and where he lived, intending to go and talk with him, and learn from his own Mouth, how he had acquitted himself of his Commission.

Here, may it please your Highness, I fix the first Æra of my Misfortunes. Would to the Lord I had never been at this Conference!

ference ! I should have avoided a great deal of Vexation and Sorrow.

Abbot *Trainasseau* was the Name of the Director, to whom we paid our next Visit, who received us with all the Politeness of a fine Gentleman. We found him in a large Study, finely ornamented, before him was a grand Ebony Bureau, spread with several Folios, half open. Every-Thing around him was exceeding neat, and so exact in his Person, his Hair, his Linnen, and his Gown, that they were all perfectly nice. Tho' not young, he had a youthful Manner, his Language was pure, his Expressions well chosen ; when he spoke there was such a bewitching Power in his Eloquence, one could not help acquiescing in every Sentiment he advanced. It was seldom, if ever, he was contradicted ; he often seemed to assent in order to dissent, and by his Manner of Address, would return to the Charge, and always bring you over to his Opinion.

He was no sooner told my Mother's Name, but he informed her, he had done himself the Honour to write to her that very Day, and that she would be satisfied of the Truth of it when she came home. While he was pronouncing these Words, he drew my Mother an Elbow Chair, and then presented me to another, and at the same Time seemed, as if he durst not presume to lift up his Eyes, or venture to look me in the

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Face; nevertheless, I afterwards catch'd him now-and-then stealing a Glance at me; I call it stealing, because I could never surprize him in the Fact.

After entertaining us a few Minutes, discouraging upon Things indifferent, he rose, and taking my Mother by the Hand, led her aside towards a Window. I soon found he began to make many Apologies, for being charged with that cruel Commission; those were his Words. He mentioned his having had a long Conference that Morning with *M. de St. Preuil*, which turned chiefly on the Method that ought to be taken in settling all his Estate on his Sons, and how to prevent such a Disposition's being disputed after his Death, by me his supposed Daughter, and owned, at the opening this Proposition, my Mother's Husband was greatly agitated, and had employed all his Eloquence, to discover the secret Cause of this Advice. That he, the Director, was of Opinion, though it was a very delicate Point, he should see *M. de St. Preuil* very easy, by giving him an Idea of the Innocency of the Affair, and prevent his penetrating into the real Matter of Fact, and by that Means, divest his Mind of a Notion, which the Passion he was in with his Wife gave him a Glimpse of, and might possibly prove of bad Consequence. This Contrivance, seemed the most extravagant and cruellest

cruellest Thing in the World for me, by making M. *de St. Preuil* believe I was a Counterfeit, and that my Mother, in Order to engage her Husband's Affections more and more, and likewise to secure a Subsistence, in Case she should survive him, (having no Child, nor any Hopes of one) she had Recourse to this Artifice, with a View of succeeding in these two important Points. The Abbot farther declared, that this Artifice seemed to pacify M. *de St. Preuil*, that he left him in so calm a Disposition, she had no Reason to be afraid of his Resentment, and doubted not, he had managed Matters so artfully, the Interest of Heaven, as well as my Mother's, were perfectly well taken Care of.

He finished his Discourse by repeating to Madam *de St. Preuil*, that he had done himself the Honour to write her a very long Letter, informing her very fully of all these Things, and that she would at her Return home, meet with his Messenger, who had Orders, if she should happen to be Abroad, to wait till she came, and deliver the Pacquet into her own Hands; and concluded, with assuring her, in a very polite Manner, of his interesting himself very strongly in her Favour, and doing every thing in his Power to oblige her.

It is natural to imagine, my Mother was extremely well satisfied with the Abbot's

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Proceedings and Professions. She acknowledged her Obligations in the politest manner, and begged he would be her Director and mine for the future. He modestly accepted the Employment, and promised to perform the Office, with as much Zeal as Inclination.

We were about to take our Leave of this seducing Ecclesiastic, (and only waited the Return of a Servant, who was gone to procure us a Light, as it began to grow towards Night) when this Domestic appeared, and told us *M. de St. Preuil* was at the Door. My Mother now thought herself ruined past Redemption, and shrieked out. The Abbot, who was endued with a greater Presence of Mind than most People, immediately left the Room, without saying a Word to us, and took the Key of it in his Pocket. We judged, that to prevent a Scene, in which he would be equally embarrassed with us, he thought it most convenient to go and meet *M. de St. Preuil*, who was at the Heels of the Servant that gave us the Alarm. We blest Heaven for bringing us to a Person who was so prudent. It was at this Time my Mother told *Louison* and me, the Account I have now related.

However cruel this Relation was for me, I did not shew any Signs of Discontent. My Concern for my Mother employed my Thoughts much more than my own Interest.

terest. I congratulated her very sincerely, that her Affairs had taken so favourable a Turn. In Spite of all the Reasons she had to be more easy, M. *de St. Preuil's* Visit at this Time, disturbed her horribly. Whether her Disorder proceeded from an Impatience of being thoroughly satisfied, it really appeared very natural. The Affair was exceeding delicate, and the critical Situation we were then in, made it no easy Matter to be composed.

As we were discussing all these Points, we heard the Study Door open, which had been locked upon us above an Hour; we fancied that M. *de St. Preuil* being gone, the Abbot was come to set us at Liberty; but how great was our Surprise, when we saw him follow the Ecclesiastic close at his Heels! My Mother changed Countenance, and was ready to faint away. For my Part, I was motionless; I could not conceive the Reason of this strange Event. I accused the Director in my Heart of being a Villain, who, for some Ends unknown to us, would thus cruelly sacrifice my Mother, after giving her such flattering Hopes, that he would positively serve her. But, I did not then know how artful the Abbot was, I had not been long enough acquainted with him.

No sooner was this ingenious Divine entered the Study, but he thus addressed his Discourse to my Mother. Be assured Ma-

dam, the Gentleman your Husband is informed. I have not scrupled to tell him, I desired your coming hither, that I might let you know, I was obliged to give him an Account of this supposititious Child (which has been concealed from him with so much Care) that it may no longer be kept a Mystery from a Husband who loves you tenderly. He now meets you here, and has previously assured me, he will forgive it, as your Intentions were innocent, provided, he has a plain Declaration of the whole Matter of Fact from your own Mouth. I have given this worthy Gentleman to understand also, that you have been so excessively chagrin'd about it, as not to be prevailed upon by any Means as yet, to disclose to him the Account that was given to me on the confessional Chair. I would have excused you this cruel Detail, if I might have been permitted to reveal it myself. But, if you continue in the same Sentiments, of letting your Husband (whose Love is without Reserve) into the Secret, only give me Leave to explain the Mystery to him, I will clear it up in the same Manner you confided it to me.

My Mother has declared to me twenty Times, she was, at the Beginning of this Discourse, all over of a cold Sweat, but, towards the Conclusion, her Spirits began to revive. She had no Occasion to put on
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a counterfeit Concern, to make her Uneasiness appear more natural; you would have pitied her. She had only just Strength enough to throw herself at *M. de St. Preuil's* Feet, and implore his Pardon for the pretended Supposition. This Scene, though fallacious, had all the Appearance of Reality, in so much, that her Husband was moved with Compassion. He took her up in his Arms, and embraced her tenderly. He carried his Good-will so far, as to dispense with her giving the Detail herself, because it would give her Pain. My Mother, who now entered perfectly well into the Genius of the Abbot, told the Ecclesiastic, she gave him Leave to reveal what she had intrusted him with. The Abbot, upon this, made a profound Reverence to *M. de St. Preuil*, and addressed him in the following Manner.

I will not pretend Sir, to palliate, or any ways excuse the Lady, for a Supposition, of which she is culpable before Heaven, and before Men. The Law has established Punishments for such, who on any Pretence whatsoever transgress them. Heaven has also its Vengeance in Store. I shall do no more in this present Occurrence than relate plain Matters of Fact, reserving to myself after I have concluded, a Right of making such Representations as are agreeable to my Function.

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Madam *de St. Preuil*, who I am very confident, was most unwilling to impose upon you, assured me, Sir, when she found, you had not that Inclination for her, she so much wished and desired, she imagined, the Misfortune of having no Child was the Cause of it, she therefore determined to use her Endeavours to have one at any Rate. Advice of Doctors, Vows, Pilgrimages, in short, every lawful Means was put in Practice, which it was Thought might prove efficacious. But Heaven, whose Ways are past finding out, would not now permit it. She communicated her Grief and Regret to a favourite Chambermaid, in whom she had great Confidence. This Girl, always zealously attached to her Lady, took upon her to contrive a Way to accomplish her secret Desires, by a peculiar Method unheard of before, which was this, the Girl found herself in the Condition her Mistress wanted to be in, and at the same Time, under a Necessity of making an Advantage of it, to extricate herself out of a real Trouble.

Louison had plighted her Troth to the Husband she now has. For Reasons, which it is not at present material to explain, the Marriage was retarded; in the interim an unpardonable Weakness made her submit to his Intreaties, before she ought to have done; in short, she found herself with Child, and this Hint she eagerly pursued for the Service
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of her Mistress, who approved of it; they settle the Point of Time, she gives it out, that her Lady is with Child, who endeavours to appear so, uses Means to persuade her Husband of it, whom she adores, and is ambitious of captivating. *Louison* was delivered at the proper Time. The next Day, her Lady pretends to be in Labour. They take Advantage of your Absence, the Child is supposed, baptized by your name, and the Supposition continues to this Day.

However, some Months after, Madam found herself really pregnant, she then regretted, but too late, the Crime she had committed. 'Tis now in vain, 'tis past Redemption. How to declare this Supposition? How to remedy it? What Expressions could be made Use of for such a Confession? Would it not produce very ticklish Consequences? They thought it the prudentest Way therefore to be silent, even till Death, which is too often the Case, and then satisfy Heaven and the World.

But, he who watches incessantly over all our Actions, and whilst he permits Crimes, reserves his Vengeance, after having waited a long Time for Reparation, the lazy Sinner at last feels the Weight of his Arm, which brings her to Repentance. *Louison* fell sick, and was at the Point of Death, she then felt the secret Cause of her Visitation, she confessed, begged Pardon, and promised

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Satisfaction. Her Confessor, charged with remedying the Injustice of this Supposition, was himself given-over, I assisted him in his last Moments, he delivered up his Charge to me, and I here now discharge myself of it.

This, Sir, continued this most artful Director, is the true State of the Case. Madam who came here with an Intention of declaring it to you herself, took Care to bring along with her that Chambermaid I mentioned, (whom undoubtedly you remember) to be ready to bear Witness of the Truth. It was with great Difficulty Madam could be prevailed upon to comply with so mortifying a Proceeding. The Secret, I doubt not, will be kept inviolable, as we all know the Consequence, and I am persuaded, you will be generous enough to protect her, to pardon what is past, and think no more of it for the future.

Thus the Abbot finished his surprising History, to which he added some salutary Advice, agreeable to the Subject. *Louison* and I were so astonished, we had not the Use of our Faculties for some Time. I have laughed twenty Times since, till the Tears came into my Eyes, when I reflected, the frightened, stupid Figure, this poor Girl made, whom they were religiously scandalising out of Charity, in order to restore my Mother's broken Honour. *Louison* protested

ted to me afterwards, she was several Times on the Brink of declaring it to be all false, and of exposing the Abbot; and nothing but her tender Regard for *Madam de St. Preuil* could have prevented her; though she had conceived, from that Time, such a Hatred to that Traitor of a Director, that she assured me she should never cease abusing him, and would not fail ruining him, if any Opportunity offered, for daring to be guilty of so impudent an Imposition, and Aspersion, as he was on this Occasion.

My Mother, however, found herself very happy, that this honest Man had of his own Accord, disposed every-thing so ingeniously. *M. de St. Preuil* behaved to her afterwards, as well as she could desire. We returned home together, but, with very different Reflections. I immediately began to feel all the Rigor of my Condition. In Effect, could any-thing be more cruel? What a Fall, my Princess! From a Person of Quality, I became at once, the Daughter of a Man and Woman, sprung from nothing, in a State of Servitude, expecting to be treated as such. I past the Night, which succeeded that fatal Day, in such Agitation, as is not to be equalled; I was compleatly miserable; I conceived a thousand Resolutions, the one more terrible than the other, I could not tell what to conclude, my Fate shocked me.

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The Sun was several Hours above the Horizon, and I had never closed my Eyes; but at length, I began to be a little drowsy, when I heard some-body knock softly at my Chamber-door, and call me by my Name. I knew it to be my Mother's Voice. In the horrible Situation I found myself, nothing could give me greater Consolation than her dear Presence; I therefore, instantly opened the Door. Her Countenance was as sad, and dejected, as mine. I observed too, she had been crying, and did not doubt my being the Cause of it.

Agnes, said she, after ordering me to go into my Bed again, I perceive you have been crying, you cannot possibly grieve for the extreme good Luck I have had, by being delivered out of that dangerous Dilemma I was involved in? If I had not reposed an entire Confidence in you, or you had been less dear to me, should I have given you those Proofs you have received? Are you apprehensive of feeling any more Uneasiness than you at present do, on Account of this pretended Supposition? No, my Child, I intend to make your future Happiness my principal Care, and if my Husband, continues the same good Dispositions I left him in, depend upon it, we shall continue to live as we used to do.

At these Words, I cast myself about *Madam de St. Preuil's* Neck, and assured her, I respected her so tenderly, I would
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not only sacrifice the dearest Thing I had in the World, but even lay down my Life for her Sake. She shewed great Pleasure at my tender Behaviour on this Occasion. We afterwards entertained ourselves with the last Evening's Adventure. She praised the Abbot's Wisdom, and Ingenuity, to the Skies. My Child, I owe him every-thing, said she, he has foud out the Secret of calming *M. de St. Preuil*, and I doubt not, if he continues to visit him, he will put him into the most favourable Disposition with Regard both to you and me. We ought to make him a Visit to acknowledge our Gratitude, which I have Thoughts of doing after Mass. As for you, I would have you let him know, how sensible you are of his obliging Proceedings, and in Order to engage him to continue his Friendship to us, I intend he shall be our Conductor for the Time to come, both in our temporal, as well as spiritual Concerns; with such a Guide, we must needs run our Race happily, and arrive with Peace and Comfort at the different Points we have in View.

After this, my Mother told me, *M. de St. Preuil* had not as yet determined anything concerning me, but she could very easily foretel his Sentiments on that Head, by the Uneasiness he had shewn on my Account, since his Knowledge of my Condition. I was very sensible of this Attention from a Person, to whom, according to this

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contrived Story, I had no Sort of Relation, I intended therefore to behave towards him with so much Deference and Respect for the future, as not to give him any Cause to think of abandoning me to my unhappy Destiny.

Before I proceed to the following Adventures, it is necessary to break off here for a few Moments. *M. de St. Preuil*, is going to act a very interesting Part; so that I must make you a little better acquainted with him. You have here his Picture, which is very proper in this Place.

He was fifty Years of Age, tall, well-shaped, with a Countenance that prepossessed one very highly in his Favour. His Courage, which he had signalized on many Occasions, was intrepid, and for which he was called Captain of the Good Success Man of War. He merited afterwards by his signal Services the highest Stations. The Court made a Point of his being promoted to the Rank of Lieutenant-General, and, bating his Bluntness, which savoured a little too much of the Tár, he might be reckoned an accomplished Cavalier.

He never had a Passion for any Woman but his own Wife, and was always excessively jealous. He liked the Sex in general moderately; but as he did not esteem them, he rarely attached himself to any one particularly. He indulged a secret Pleasure in looking at them, but avoided their Conversation, and if he happened to fancy one more
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than another, the Diffidence he had, of being liked, or listened to, always discouraged him. In short, if the first Motion of his Suit had not the desired Effect, his Passion took a Disgust, and was no sooner kindled, but it was extinguished again.

One Touch more, and I have done. Tho' M. de St. Preuil was by Nature haughty, he detested Flattery; the Custom of the World, and what we term Politeness, he despised, as meer Affectation; he always wish'd there was more Sincerity and less Complaisance in the World. He had in the utmost Contempt all those, who, to ingratiate themselves, connived at the Failings of the Great; it was a Maxim with him to treat them with Familiarity to discover their Defects, and endeavour to reclaim them; if any one represented to him, that by such a Behaviour, they should risque what they had obtained with great Difficulty, as well as Prejudice their Hopes of further Advancement; he would answer; it were better never to have any-thing, than to gain Power, and Riches, at the Expence of Honour, and Virtue. In a Word, as he knew his own Temper, he had no intimate Friends? And declared, he by that Means, found out the Secret of spending his Days with Tranquillity.

I shall now return to my Mother; she advised me, as soon as I was dressed, to wait upon M. de St. Preuil, at whose Departure,
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we should go to Mass, and from thence to the Abbot's, and that she would stay for me in her own Room. This Visit to M. *de St. Preuil* cost me dear. I put on my most ordinary Gown, that I might appear plain and decent, agreeable to my new Condition. I, who used to be exceeding nice in decking myself out, altered it even to a Patch. This Change hurt me, though my Person was still the same, I could not appear before my Glass without sighing inwardly, when I beheld the different Figure I made to what I was used to do. The Remarks of my Chambermaid, and her Exclamations, at seeing me dressed in this Manner, were Daggers to my Heart. It brought to my Mind all the Misery of my Condition, and had it not been for the Remains of a little Pride, which got the Better of my Grief, my Tears would have forced a Passage, and I should have discovered my Weakness.

My innate Vanity got the Ascendant. I left my Room, without giving the Maid a Word of Answer, and went to M. *de St. Preuil's* Apartment. I thought, I was now no longer the same Person, who had been treated with the tenderest Regard, always allowed to go in and out without asking any Leave. I stopped at M. *de St. Preuil's* Closet Door, and asked his Valet-de-Chambre, greatly embarrassed, if his Master was

to be seen, and I should not disturb him. Your Highness may please to observe, I durst not call him Father, I made use of the Word Master, which I had never been accustomed to before. The Valet-de-Chambre did not seemingly give any Heed to this Sort of Behaviour, and according to Custom opened the Door, without making any Reply. I hesitated whether I should go in or not, which made *M. de St. Preuil* say twice; who's there? Upon this, I ventured to advance a little farther.

I am persuaded, your Highness would have pitied me, had you been present when I presented myself to *M. de St. Preuil*, who turning his Head, and seeing who it was, said, in his common Tone, (which is a little rough) why don't you come in then? That Tone, which I ought to have remembered, as I had been so long accustomed to it, appeared under the Apprehensions I then was, designed on Purpose for me. I had preconceived a short Compliment to address him in, but was so terrified, it quite slipt my Memory, and I stood like a Statue. *M. de St. Preuil* was returned to his Writing, and did not look off his Paper again for some Minutes. This Behaviour, though it had no Meaning in it, mortified me very much, notwithstanding I never used to be treated with any Sort of Ceremony. I looked upon it as a fresh Instance of the little
Regard

Regard he shewed for me. This Notion made so strong an Impression upon me, and had gained so upon my Mind, instead of advancing, I turned about, with Tears in my Eyes, in order to go away. I could not endure to stay any longer in a Place, where I fancied myself disregarded.

The Noise I made at going out, occasioned M. *de St. Preuil* to lift up his Head. Why are you going away, my Child, said he? I have some thing to say to you; I will only finish my Letter, the Post stays, and I shall have done in a Moment. These few Words dissipated my Fears, it made me start, to hear him call me, my Child. I apprehended, I was alarmed without Reason, I went therefore and sat me down by the Fire, much easier in my Mind.

Well, my Dear *Agnes*! How do you do? Said M. *de St. Preuil*, after he had given his Letter to a Footman, and ordered him to let no one in; are you not, (as indeed we all must be) exceedingly astonished, at the extraordinary News we were told Yesterday? For my own Part, I protest, continued he, I have hardly recovered my Surprise. But what do I see? looking stedfastly at me, the Tears are in your Eyes, and you seem overwhelmed with Sorrow, what Folly! and your Dress too. I dare venture a wager, this Adventure has touched your little Heart, and put some strange Notions into your
 Head,

Head, of Things which will never happen. Go! you are a meer Child. Is it possible, with your Sense, to know *Madam de St. Preuil* and I no better. Has not she told you? I desired she would make you easy. Hear me, my Child, continued he, taking me by the Hand, I don't say your Affliction is absolutely without Cause. I am more concerned for your Interest than you imagine. Do you understand me right?

This Discourse affected me so much, and inspired me with such a Sense of Gratitude, I rose up to throw myself at *M. de St. Preuil's* Feet; but he prevented, and embraced me; make yourself easy, I say, continued he, forcing me to sit down again. I have a Design in my Head, which will be no Misfortune to you, but in the mean Time, till I find a convenient Opportunity of communicating my Intentions, live as you used to do, that neither the Servants, nor the World, may have any Sort of Suspicion. Are you not my Child? Go! set your little Heart at Rest, Time will bring all Things about, and believe me, you will find yourself very happy.

I was about acknowledging to *M. de St. Preuil* how sensible I was of his Goodness, when a Servant came to tell him there was a Nobleman at the Door, whom he durst not let wait, or send away. It happened to be the *Marquis de Sketling*.—I had a Glimpse

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Glimpse of him in the House once before, but was never allowed to be in his Company, or indeed the Company of any Man, and till that very Day no one of the Male Sex had ever spoke to me.

I left *M. de St. Preuil's* Closet upon the Marquis's coming in. What! I should be very sorry to interrupt so amiable a *Tete-a-tete*. No Count, continued he, addressing himself to *M. de St. Preuil*, and at the same Time, very politely stopping me, either Miss shall come back again, or I will bid you a Good-morrow. *M. de St. Preuil* smiled, and said, I was his Daughter going to make a Visit with my Mother; assuring the Marquis, if ever he happened to surprize him in an Intrigue, he should with all his Heart partake with him.

I made a very low Courtesy, and took my Leave. The Marquis drew himself up to let me pass by, and seemed extremely surprized, when he found I was *M. de St. Preuil's* Daughter; and followed me with his Eyes, which I could not help remarking. Nothing of this Sort escapes a young Person, especially when a Cavalier is handsome, and appears so engaging at first Sight. My Thoughts were now taken up with what I have here related, much more than with those interesting Things, I had just before been told, and which, to say the Truth, it would

would have been better worth my while to have meditated upon.

My Mother seemed perfectly satisfied with the Account I gave her of the Reception I met with from her Husband; she drew very happy Consequences from it, and renewed her former kind Assurances of her Goodness. After we had returned Thanks to Heaven for our late miraculous Deliverance, we proceeded to the Abbot's. Here a Servant told us a certain Dutchess, his Penitent, whose Name it was not proper to mention, had sent her Coach for him that Morning, to come and pass some Days with her in the Country. *Agnes*, said my Mother, with an Air, that shewed she was greatly pleased to be told this, you see what a Person this Director is, whom we have made Choice of. He is sought after by all the great People about the Court, they strive who shall have him. Had I been as well acquainted with him then, as I was a few Years after, I should have told her, what his Servant then informed us, was a common Artifice of the Abbot's, to impose upon his Penitents in that Manner, that he might be thought a Man of great Consequence. It was often the Case, when he had one of his precious Votaries in private with him, to give out these Sort of Messages. Is it possible, my Princess, that we should find Cheats in all Professions.

Prejudiced

Prejudiced as I was, by those continual Commendations my Mother daily lavished upon him, it would have been a very difficult Matter, at that Time, to make me entertain a bad Opinion of our Director. The very first Visit we made him, I was charmed with his Manner; I don't know, if I did not for some Time after, exceed my Mother in my Encomiums. What shall I say? I was no sooner his Penitent, but I became his Partizan. I talked Night and Day of him to my Mother, and a young Woman, *M. de St. Preuil* had brought into the House on a Pretence of keeping me Company. I was enchanted, my Princess, yes, I vow I was enchanted; could you believe it possible, for any one to be so passionately fond of a Director.

About a Month after the fatal Scene I have told you of, in which I played so dismal a Part, my Mother was obliged to leave us, and take a Journey into *Provence*, an Aunt she was Heir to being then at the Point of Death. When I heard of this Journey, it greatly afflicted me, and I communicated it to the Abbot the same Day, for I had nothing to conceal from him. He asked me, with a Sort of Earnestness, which pleased me, if it was determined I should go with my Mother to *Provence*, and if I did not make myself uneasy without a Cause? I told him it was true, *Madam-de St. Preuil* had

had not as yet made me acquainted with her Intentions, but in all Likelihood she would not leave me in the House by myself. Upon this I fell a crying. Does not my misplaced Fondness astonish your Highness? What do you apprehend? Suspend your Judgment a little; I had only a tender Friendship for this Man; but he shewed a Thousand particular Regards for me. When I was sometimes almost eaten up with the Spleen, he would comfort me; when I reflected on the Cruelty of my Stars, he would alleviate my Anxiety so pathetically, in such bewitching Language, I was always greatly consoled, and could not think of returning to my own melancholy Reflections, without bitterly regretting the leaving so powerful a Comforter.

My too charming Director sent me away according to Custom, that is to say, well satisfied, and very tranquil. He told me, he would find a Method to keep me at *Paris*; and advised me to say nothing of it; assuring me, I should see if he deserved my Confidence, and my Regret to leave him. In fact, he no sooner spoke to my Mother, but the next Day my Fears were removed. *Madam de St. Preuil* told me, she should not take me along with her, she loved me too well to endanger my being forget by *M. de St. Preuil*, that it was necessary I should be a faithful Companion to him, and above all Things, endeavour to caress him as much as I could. If you was

to do otherwise, or if I should be so imprudent to take you from him, said she, my Husband may change those favourable Sentiments he now has for you. Who knows, but his Suspicions might return; and when you came back, we might perceive some direful Alteration in him? The best Way therefore to prevent that Misfortune, is to observe every Tittle of this Advice; which comes from our wise Director, and you know him too well, not to be fully persuaded, but that he gave it merely for your sole Interest and Advantage.

This new Advice gave me infinite Pleasure, though I durst not discover the Joy to my Mother: I impatiently expected the Day I was to see the Abbot again, that I might tell him how sensible I was of the Happiness he had procured me. Morning, Noon, and Night, I thought of nothing else but him. But the most extraordinary Part of this strange Prepossession, was, that I really thought it meritorious. I did not apprehend in the least, the Danger I was running into. The Converse of one's Director, hardens the Heart, as it were, and makes it insensible to those very Objects which should concern us most. I saw my Mother go, without feeling that Reluctance one ought to have at such a Separation. I did not shed so much as one Tear. Is it not strange, the Apprehension of never seeing her again, and being left

a Prey to the wide World, should not once enter into my Head?

Immediately after the Departure of my Mother, *M. de St. Preuil's* Behaviour was quite another Thing, to what it had ever been before. I was not only surprized, but it touched me. Till now, he had always treated me like a Daughter, without any Ceremony, and very agreeably. I was no sooner alone with him, but he joined to the Care of a tender Parent that of an assiduous Lover. I was very ignorant of the World at that Time, being in my fifteenth Year only, and had always been kept confined, without Company, without Books, constantly employed at Work in my Mother's Room. I never had any Reason to trouble my Head about the Men's Way of Thinking, or Acting. - I imagined they were all sincere, never having had any Cause to suspect the contrary.

Besides, the Behaviour Madam de *St. Preuil* advised me to at Parting, made me not only very mindful and complaisant to her Husband, but I thought of performing Miracles. I little imagined, that by pursuing this Conduct, I was forwarding an infinite Number of Misfortunes, which were on the Brink of falling upon me.

Not a Day passed, but *M. de St. Preuil* brought me some new Present. The first Mark of Authority he shewed, after my

Mother left us, was, to bid me throw aside the plain Habit I had devoted myself to. He desired me to dress gay; and, in order to please him, I put on all those expensive Ornaments he presented me with.

I always used to wear a Handkerchief or Pillarine. He one Day read me a Lecture on this Subject; and said, it was a Shame, at my Age, to dress myself like a Nun. To oblige me to do what was so agreeable to my natural Taste, gave me no sort of Pain. I always loved Jewels extremely; and thought myself the happiest little Creature in the World, to have it in my Power to follow my own Inclinations, without any Fear of being blamed for it.

I told you, *M. de St. Preuil* had brought a young Woman into the House, to keep me Company; who behaved, at her first coming, with such Civility, Respect, and Complaisance, that my Affection for her was so great, I did not like to have her a Moment from me. I desired she might have a Bed in my Room; but even that would not satisfy my Friendship for her; I obliged her to take Part of mine; and in this manner of Life, we seldom were asunder, Day or Night.

She was two Years older than myself, and the Daughter of a Keeper of a Castle belonging to *M. de St. Preuil*. She had been brought up in a Convent at *Paris*. The Cloister,

Cloister, far from inspiring her with that Decency, Sobriety, and Modesty, so suitable to a young Girl, she was on the contrary fickle, heedless, and sometimes, not so decent in her Conversation as she ought to have been; and yet, in Spite of these Defects, (which I soon discovered) I could not help being attached to her, and having a Friendship for her. She knew how to amuse me; I was naturally inclined to Vapours; and *Babet* (for that was the Girl's Name) had found out the Secret of dissipating them agreeably.

One Day, *M. de St. Preuil* made me a Present of a very rich Gown, and had been caressing me in an extraordinary manner. I asked *Babet*, when we were in Bed, what she thought of *M. de St. Preuil's* heaping such Presents upon me, even unasked, and more than I desired or deserved. I had my Reasons for asking her this Question. —

A strong Suspicion possessed me, that this Girl must have found out the Secret of my Birth; and what made me apprehensive of it, was, because I had now and then been so imprudent, to let fall at unawares some half Words, which gave me Cause to suspect it, and be greatly uneasy. She answered me very plainly, and said, she had for some Time guessed the Reason for my being so caressed, and treated in that agreeable manner; but never dare presume to tell me, for fear I

should blab it out to *M. de St. Preuil*, and he should send her back to her Father, to teach her to hold her Tongue. This Answer heightened my Curiosity. I promise you, my Dear *Babet*, said I briskly, if you will tell me, I shall keep it inviolably, be it what it will. Go! you have no Reason to distrust me, I am naturally discreet, and would die, sooner than betray a Confident. Upon these Conditions then, replied my young Confident, I will make no Secret of my Sentiments. Behold, *M. de St. Preuil* loves you passionately, and that's the Reason. If that is all the Secret, replied I, ironically, you tell me nothing new. I have known that long ago, I am much pleased with it; nor am I ungrateful, I assure you, but shall make him a suitable Return.

Babet gave no Answer to this, which I wondered at. I asked, if what I said made her mute. No, cry'd she, but I am surprized. By your own Confession, *M. de St. Preuil* loves you, and his Love meets with a Return. I have been made to believe you love me too, and would hide nothing from me, but have never mentioned one Word of this Secret. Do you jeer me? said I, smiling. It would be a very fine Secret to tell, that a young Girl had an Affection for her Father. Is it so strange a Thing now-a-days? Yes, without Doubt, replied *Babet*, bursting into a violent Laugh, your Answer is so comical,

I pro-

I protest, I did not expect it. What is the Meaning of this Sally? said I, I can't think I gave any Cause for it. Oh! I ask your Pardon, added my Confident. It is indeed merry enough, to think we may continue this Subject as long as we please without understanding each other. Why so? replied I, greatly troubled at this Discourse. Is there any Occasion for wondering at M. *de St. Preuil's* Goodness to me? Yes truly, continued *Babet*. But you are talking of the Love of a Father, and I am speaking about that of a Lover.

This made me break forth into a loud Exclamation. What do you mean, *Babet*, said I, by what you have now declared? Can any Thing be so extravagant, to imagine, that my own Father No, replied this Girl coolly, I do not imagine any such Thing; but in saying M. *de St. Preuil* loved you, as a Lover does his Mistress, I did not suppose there were any Crime in it; for I should have been silent, if I had surmised it in the least, nor ventured to have opened my Mouth about the Matter.

This Answer was too clear for me not to understand it. I comprehended very well, that *Babet* had been thoroughly informed of the very worst Part of my History; and this Conjecture made me very uneasy. However, I thought it necessary to clear up this important Point; and in order to bring it

about, I continued to dissemble, by which Means I succeeded.

If your Love for me is as sincere as I have been flattered, said I, How can you delight to make me uneasy, and throw me into this Perplexity? How am I to construe your Words? What an odd Way of explaining yourself? You must certainly be distrustful of my Discretion, by talking to me thus in Riddles, which I cannot comprehend. What am I to apprehend, by your telling me, my Father may love me, as a Lover does his Mistress, and that very innocently? This Determination seems to me very unnatural. I vow it surprizes me, and I really do not know what to make of it.

This cunning *Babet* kept me for some Time in Suspense; and then said, if I would not be angry, she would explain the Mystery to me. I gave her my Word I would not. Well then, added she, I know you are not the Daughter of *M. de St. Preuil*, and have no Right to the Name. And pray, who let you into this Piece of secret History, said I? interrupting her, and blushing. Your own Self — My own Self? replied I briskly. Yes, your own Self, continued she, you told it me in your Sleep. One Night, having been in Bed some Time before me, I heard you muttering some Words, which my Surprise made me attentive to. I thought, at first, it was a meer Joke, a Trick put upon me;

me; but I presently heard you prattle in good Earnest, complaining for a while of the Hardship of your Condition, after that, exclaiming. What! I am not the Daughter of *M. de St. Preuil*. What! Mother! is it true? Why have you concealed it from me so long?

I was drawn into a Snare; by giving Credit to this perfidious *Babet*. Far from suspecting *M. de St. Preuil's* having any Design upon me, or that he had employed this young Person, to bring his Designs about, and learn from the Confidence I should consequently repose in her, as my intimate Companion, a thousand little Secrets Girls naturally communicate to one another, which seldom transpire, and Friends very carefully preserve. I must own the Senses had too much the Ascendency over me; and that in the frequent and dangerous Opportunities I had with *Babet*, I let her discover their Power. I always behaved to her with the strictest Sincerity, without Distrust, without Suspicion, I shewed her what I really was, unable to make Use of the least Degree of Artifice.

I recollected, (the Moment *Babet* informed me, what I was absolutely determined to be satisfied of,) that my Governess had one Day told my Mother, before me, of my being restless in my Sleep, and frequently talking in my Slumber. I regretted my not sooner remembering this Trick in my Infancy;

if I had, it is to be presumed, I should not have suffered any Person to lie in my Chamber, much less in the same Bed with me. I condemned myself for this Imprudence a long while; but after some Years, I learned the Truth of the Story. *M. de St. Preuil*, whom this Girl had been devoted to for some Time, let her into the Secret, to give her an Authority to speak to me of his Love with less Restraint. As I was nothing to him, since he believed me a supposititious Child, he thought himself under no Obligation to behave as a Father ought, whose Duty it is to be the Guardian of his Daughter's Honour. For which Reason, therefore, he imagined, on the contrary, that he should do me a great Favour, in making Choice of me for his Mistress; and fancied by that, he should make me some Amends, for the Misfortune of my being no longer his Child.

Perfectly ignorant at that Time of all these Things, I desired *Babet* would be discreet, and, for her Life, never mention what she had told me. I promise, said she, on Condition you follow the good Counsel I shall give. Well, what is this good Counsel, said I, and at the same Time, was greatly surprized she should so immediately take upon her to shew the Power she had over me. To behave in such a Manner, *M. de St. Preuil* may see your Endeavours to merit his Goodness, continued she. I
incon-

inconsiderately promised, not apprehending what she meant. I am but too sensible of his Favours, said I, which I shall acknowledge on a proper Occasion.

It was so very late before we finished this Conversation, in a few Minutes, I fell fast asleep, without waking until Noon the next Day. *Babet* had left me alone, and I was about to rise, when I heard the Door of my Chamber open softly. Come in, my dear *Babet*, cry'd I, you are a naughty Girl, to let me sleep so long. I had no sooner spoke these Words, but *M. de St. Preuil* appeared. Don't grumble at *Babet*, said he, smiling, she did right, I would not let you be disturbed; my Orders are, that every Body in this House shall make it their Business to please and oblige you. I was greatly surprized at so unexpected and so unusual a Visit, tho' I took Care to conceal my Concern. You are always the same, my dear Papa, said I, ever good to me. I cannot be too much so to my dear Child, answered he, placing himself in an Easy-chair by my Bed-side. There, there's a few Trifles I have brought you; happy if they are to your Taste. What Trifles, good Lord! cry'd I, opening a little Box, which contained a Pearl Neck-lace, and a Pair of Diamond Ear-rings. But how can I accept of such a Present, my dear Papa. Yes, my dear Child, continued *M. de St. Preuil*, I

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intend to do more for you, which you shall be convinced of before many Days.

How imprudent are young Girls! What Snares does the Love of Finery expose them to! I was so infatuated with this magnificent Present, I did not give myself Time to reflect on any-Thing else, but the Pleasure of thinking how I should dress myself. Let us see, said I to *M. de St. Preuil*, if these Diamonds and this Necklace become me; at the same Time, I could hardly take my Eyes off them while I was speaking to him. Hold, said he, taking the Necklace, let me put it on, there is a secret Spring you cannot find out, and in my Life I never saw so ingenious a Contrivance of the Sort.

M. de St. Preuil amused himself greatly at the Transport I shewed at this Time. When I put on the Ear-rings, he was so complaisant to fetch the Looking-glass from my Toilet, that I might enjoy all the Satisfaction I desired. He tied the Ends of my Night-cap on my Head, because they hid my Ears. I suffered him to do it, not suspecting his Design. Do you know, said he, (looking at me with an Air of Freedom, I never observed him to do in so sprightly a Manner before) that there is such a Contrast between your Jewels and Undress, as is most charmingly singular? I perfectly adore you, continued he, with a Sea-oath, but that your Beauty may appear in its full Splendor, undo
your

your Waistcoat which confines your Breast, you will then be more at your Ease. I could not guess what he meant by this, and I asked him what Necessity there was for it. You will see, continued he, endeavouring to caress me, and I dare say you apprehend my Taste for — No, no, my dear Papa, answered I, snatching away his Hand, for at that Time, I felt myself in a strange Disorder, which made me begin to think it a serious Affair; pray let me go to my Toilet, and put my Jewels in their proper Places. What! cry'd he, without pausing, do you think me capable of — No, no, said I, in a Tone more resolute than I thought I ever dare, but this Behaviour, is to me, something very extraordinary, and for ought I know, it may be neither innocent, or lawful, and I am determined you shall never behave so to me again.

That confident Tone, and refractory Air, with which I uttered these few Words, stopped him short. I did not believe, said he, looking pensively at me, that my Child would have behaved to me with so little Complaisance; she used to treat me more tenderly, I protest, I am confounded. I flattered myself she loved me, and with that pleasing Prepossession, fancied, she would never object to such little Amusements as must have crowned my Days with Happiness. Yes! I could have sworn she would have

have partook with me the Pleasures she inspired, and her Love, which she has a thousand Times assured me of, would on the contrary, exceed every Thing else that could delight me.

I made no Answer to this Sort of Discourse. Quite distracted in my Mind, and very much perplexed what Course to take; at last, a Ray of Reason enlightened my innocent Heart, and gave me to understand, I had been very unwise, to expose myself in that Manner. I began to meditate how I ought to conduct myself. I was alone with a Man, who was rash and enterprizing. Should he carry Things to Extremity, and I cry out for Help, to what Purpose would such weak Clamours be; it would only hasten my impending Ruin, or perhaps, occasion its being blazed abroad, to my Dishonour? No one, sure, was ever so much embarrassed in their own Minds, as I was at this Time, and I believe, any one in my Situation must have been the same.

After a short Reflection, I judged the best Way of extricating myself, would be to sooth him. Yes, my dear Papa, I do love you, cry'd I, closing my Hands, and looking at him trembling. But, if I am as dear, as you would have me believe, give me not Cause to alter my Sentiments. I am in great Pain, for fear you should withdraw the Friendship you have honoured me with; if
by

by my Indiscretion I have incurred your Displeasure, let my Innocence plead my Pardon, and do not cast me into Despair. If what you would have me do, and which I cannot at present prevail upon myself to comply with, is only some trifling Amusement, as you tell me, the Consequence of your Friendship for me, I protest, at another Time I will be all Obedience. But, I beg for Heaven's Sake, leave me now to my own Reflections. My present Trouble and Agitation is such, as would thwart all those Douceurs you may have promis'd yourself. If it be really so, that you cannot enjoy any Pleasure without my participating the same, I sincerely declare, I shall think it a great Misfortune, to have the least Reluctance to any-thing you shall require.

I don't know, whether it was the Manner in which I said this, or Heaven, who guards the Innocent, that now declared in my Favour ; but I had no sooner finished this Petition, than M. *de St. Preuil* was calm. Go ! you are very charming. That exquisite Delight I so ardently desire, and which will be permitted me one Day or other to partake, shall be your own Choice ; to yourself alone will I be obliged for it. Compose yourself, my dear little Girl. I promise, I shall henceforth endeavour to obtain my Suit by Prayers and Intreaties only. Take this as a Mark of my Esteem and Respect, and a Proof of the

the tender Regard I have for you. Know likewise, and be assured, should you be able to prevail upon yourself to love me well enough to consent voluntarily to my Happiness; that Day you condescend, that very Day, I will make your Fortune. Yes! I solemnly promise, to put you into so happy a Situation, as to be ever after absolutely independent.

I was preparing an Answer to these great Promises, much delighted to find myself delivered from that frightful Risque my Virtue had run; and in my Transport lifted up both my Hands, to shew my Thankfulness, when the Door of my Chamber flew open, a Cavalier appeared at once, and presented himself before us. Who should it be, but the Marquis *de Sberling*, he that came into my supposed Father's Closet, the Morning after that fatal Day I was informed of my unhappy Condition. Do you remember Count *de St. Préuil*, cry'd he, advancing forwards without any Ceremony, though smiling, that upon a Surprise of this Sort, not long ago, I had your Word of Honour. If you have not a mind to understand me, or if you have really forgot, I'll now repeat how it was. You absolutely promised me, before Miss, or Madam here, which you please, that if ever I surprised you in an Intrigue again, I should go your Halves withal your Heart. I have now catched you in the
Fact,

Fact, there is no evading it. I have a Right, as you see, to insist upon your Promise. I know I have to do with a Man of his Word, who scorns to forfeit it; I shall therefore make myself easy.

But what is the Meaning of all this Concern, this Embarrassment? continued he, looking *maliciously*, first at one, then at the other. Ye look as if I had petrified ye both. Have I acted imprudently? Did I come in too soon? speak, if I find I have done amiss, I shall never forgive myself.

The End of the first Part.

P A R T II.

IT is natural to imagine, the unexpected Appearance of the Marquis *de Sberling*, and his rallying Discourse, must throw M. *de St. Preuil*, and myself, into the utmost Confusion; nor could we easily recover ourselves. Think, my Princess, the Condition I must needs be in, with Regard to my Dress. What could any one conceive? My Dishabille was not only in Disorder, but my Night-cap, my Bed, the Oddness of my Jewels; all declared against us, and would heighten the most extravagant Conjectures. What Room was there to imagine, a Father could occasion that suspicious Look? In short, much might have been said upon it; but M. *de St. Preuil*, was too sensible a Man not to pursue the properest Method in so delicate a Case. He was remarkable all his Life for his great Presence of Mind, and happily for us, this Faculty did not forsake him when we stood in so much Need of it.

Was I not so well acquainted with you as I am, Marquis, reply'd my pretended Father, looking with that Air of Confidence which made him regarded, I should not give myself the Trouble of a Reply, much less,
explain

explain the Occasion of this *Tete-a-tete*, as you suppose it, which proceeded from a very different Motive than what is imagined; but, one who has always been my Friend, I cannot deceive; know therefore, I am greatly dissatisfied with my Daughter, and that very justly. I have none but her, I love her, and always thought I had Reason to do it; she, instead of thinking how to sustain me in my approaching Age, attempts to forsake me, she will be a Nun, in short, she has not that natural Affection for her Father and Mother she ought; 'tis that which troubles me, and is now the Point in Dispute. Since she has been possessed with this Infatuation, there is nothing I have not endeavoured, to put this Project out of her Head, which is as displeasing to me, as it is unreasonable, Cloaths, Jewels, public Diversions, all have been tried to dissipate it; you see now about her Neck a Proof of my Endeavours to flatter her Vanity. She was always fond of Jewels, I bought her a Necklace cost me a thousand Crowns, I gave her a Pair of Buckles worth ten thousand Livers; but she cares for nothing; it is out of a Sort of affected Complaisance if she puts them on, and that, perhaps, only for a few Minutes, while I am present. I was in Hopes those Jewels would have produced a happier Effect, and inspired her with so much Vanity, as to have banished all Thoughts of a
Convent,

Convent, which has afflicted me so much; but, Marquis, she has no Tenderneſs for her Parents. I repeat it to you again, ſhe would inhumanly abandon them; the moſt cogent and affecting Reaſons have been thrown away upon her. What Answer do you think ſhe makes me? That ſhe reſpects and loves us tenderly, but her unrelenting Heart, is to be palliated truly with the intereſt of Heaven. Chriſtian maxims are extolled, and excuſes herſelf by ſaying, the Call of Heaven is preferable to the Call of Nature, and every Thing ought to give Way to that Opinion. Juſt as you entered, added *M. de St. Preuil* ſorrowfully, ſhe redoubled her Entreaties, that I would carry her to make her Vows, but ſhe has no room to hope ſuch Indulgence from me. This Ingrate is ſtriking a poignard into my Breſt. Let her do as ſhe will, I find it in vain to trouble my Head any more about it; I ſhall therefore leave her to her own bad Heart, and fatal Condition. Heaven, which ſhe makes a Pretence for her Want of Affection, will revenge my Cauſe, and ſooner or later puniſh her actual Diſobedience, which ſhe perſiſts in, ſo contrary to Nature and Gratitude; for I would have her to know, the firſt Duty of a Child well born, is a due Performance of that Submiſſion ſhe owes her Parents.

After *M. de St. Preuil* had uttered theſe Words.

Words, which were very moving, and spoke with an Air, as if he was really troubled, he left the Room, and the Marquis *de Sherling* proved a Dupe to this Adventure. For my own Part, I was so astonished at the artful Method my pretended Father had taken to extricate himself out of this Affair, I was motionless, and like a Person deprived the Use of Speech, all my Faculties were suspended but that of Seeing. The Marquis seem'd afflicted, and with a pensive doubtful Look, made two Steps towards the Door, as if he had a Mind to follow M. *de St. Preuil*, then stopping short, he gazed upon me with great Attention, as if some inward Power was secretly agitating of him in my Favour.

A deep Sigh, which dropped involuntarily from me, changed the Scene. What occasioned that Sigh I should be greatly puzzled to account for. The most probable Conjecture, was, the Danger I had so lately escaped. There are certain Situations, when wearied with enduring, we come at last to have no Feeling at all. Sometimes also, these Motions which seem to arise from that Sorrow which rebounds as it were from a Heart overburdened with Woe, proceed only from a too strong Retention of our Breath. This is no Wonder, for by being so intent upon the Cause, we very often ascribe that to the Mind, which relates to the
Body

Body. This Question has been a long Time, and is still in Dispute, neither have I yet heard, if it was ever decided.

The Sigh I mentioned, gave Rise to a Conversation which was very engaging. The Marquis *de Sberling*, being fully persuaded that I intended to turn Nun, made Use of all the Rhetoric he was Master of, to dissuade me from it. I'll not trouble your Highness with the Picture he drew of the Convent, and the immured Life they lead there, which would be taking up your Time to little Purpose. Besides, who knows it better than yourself? I shall only say, he painted their cruel Situation in such lively Colours, and so well adapted to give me a Disgust, that I have ever since held that reclusè Life in the utmost Detestation.

As soon as the Marquis was gone, I began seriously to reflect on what had passed between M. *de St. Preuil* and me. However ignorant I was of the Evil, I plainly apprehended his Designs were not fitting, and that I could not submit to the Complaisance he required of me, without offending against Decency. I was greatly alarmed at this Idea, and since I was doubtful in what manner to conduct myself, I thought it most prudent to take Advice how to prevent engaging myself improperly: While my Mother was at *Paris*, I did not fail to acquaint my Director with all my Difficulties. I was

too well attached to him, and my Veneration for him was too great, ever to conceal my Troubles and Perplexities from him. The Thoughts of going to one who's Wisdom I had so great an Opinion of, gave me Encouragement; as soon therefore as I was fit to appear abroad, I went directly to his House, as eagerly as any young Girl flies to that she is most interested in.

When I came there, he was shut up in his Closet with a Woman, and one of the first Quality, his Servant would have made me believe; which was their common Practice. He had like to have sent me away; but, recollecting my Face at the Door, I was shew'd into the Abbot's Chamber, with a Promise to let me know as soon as he was at Liberty.

I threw myself into an easy Chair, and survey'd all the Objects which surrounded me, and fixing my Eyes by Chance upon a Table, where I saw a Book very finely bound, either through Indolence or Curiosity, I opened it, when a Letter fell out, which I replaced. I was in Doubt for some Time, whether I should read this Paper or not, it was a Woman's Hand, and that I own a great Temptation. I desisted for some Time, and thought it an indiscreet Thing to pry into other People's Secrets which did not regard me; the Conflict was short, but Curiosity got the better at last, and I opened
the

the Letter, which contained the following Lines.

B I L L E T.

“ I Am not yet thoroughly convinced, my
 “ dear Director ; several Scruples arise in
 “ my Breast, which all the Force of your
 “ Arguments have not been able to get the
 “ better of. Come, and try to banish them
 “ entirely out of my Heart. I own I wish
 “ to have it brought about But how?
 “ It appears to me no easy Matter, to re-
 “ concile your Truths with the Prejudices
 “ of my Education. You assure me, 'tis
 “ only to particular Persons you communi-
 “ cate your Light, and I flatter myself, I
 “ am one of those, you would not chuse to
 “ instruct by Halves. I have a thousand
 “ Questions to ask, be prepared to resolve
 “ me. I shall expect you at Dinner, and
 “ will take Care, to get shut of all trouble-
 “ some Folks, to prevent our being inter-
 “ rupted as we were the last Time. *Mon-*
 “ *day*, the

“ *P. S.* I have opened my Letter again.
 “ My Husband, who was to have dined to
 “ Day with the President *de* is just
 “ returned, and spends the Day at Home.
 “ Come not therefore till To-morrow ; do
 “ not fail on any Account whatsoever, if
 “ you do, I will never forgive you.”

The

The Reading of this Billet helped to impose upon my Credulity. I had before a very high opinion of the Abbot, but it was nothing in Comparison of what I now thought of him. I did not Question his being the most learned Man alive, since he was made Arbiter in the most abstruse Points of Doctrine. I judged by the Stile of the Letter, she must be a Person of the first Rank, who wrote it, and those Precautions she used to enjoy her Director alone, that the Conversation of this Ecclesiastic must be very attracting, that every disagreeable Person, or whatever might interrupt them, was to be discarded. In this Opinion, I thought myself exceeding happy, that a Person of such very great Importance would admit me now-and-then for a Quarter of an Hour. Thus entirely prejudiced with a very high Opinion of him, is it at all to be wondered at, if I endeavoured as much as possible, to be taken Notice of, as one of that Croud of Penitents his Merit has acquired?

What a surprizing Thing Prejudice is! Till this Time, I had never observed any Thing so very extraordinary in the Abbot, more than in a common Director, whom one respects, or likes, if you please, for being the Arbiter of our Salvation. But when he came into the Room, I saw him with quite different Eyes, his Air I thought was noble, nay it was majestical, and my happy

D

Prepossession

74 *The* MEMOIRS *of a*

Prepossession had drawn him, in my own Mind, in a very advantageous Light. He accosted me in so obliging a Manner, I am not able to describe it. I had almost forgot the important Subject I came about, the Joy I felt at the Sight of him was so great. He prevented me, by asking, if I had heard any News of *Madam de St. Preuil*; this Question made me recollect myself, and awakened all my Grief and Disquiet. I told him, I had received only one Letter since her Departure, but that was the least of my Trouble. This Opening, made him question me with the greatest Eagerness. But before I entered into the most material Part of my Story, the Abbot fastened the Door, and put me into an Elbow-chair, and set himself down by me, with an Air that seemed to declare the Interest he should have in the Confidence I was about to make him. Nothing engages one more to unburthen the Heart, than such Treatment. I told the whole of *M. de St. Preuil's* Behaviour to me since my Mother's Departure. After I had prepared him for the last Scene, I have before related to you, I gave him the Detail, without omitting the most minute Circumstance; which when I had ended, begged his Opinion of my Behaviour, and how to conduct myself for the future. I told my Tale with such Volubility, I gave not the proper Attention how it was received; but, when

when I had made an End of speaking, I fixed my Eyes upon his, which were turned towards the Ground, like one in profound Meditation. I judged the Secret I had imparted to him, was of the utmost Consequence by the Impression it seemed to make upon him. I trembled, for fear my Behaviour had displeased my Director. I was therefore going to excuse myself without further Consideration, when he began to lift up his Eyes, and looking wishfully at me, fetched a deep Sigh. O Heavens! cry'd he, did I rightly understand you? Is it possible, my dear Penitent could be exposed to such imminent Danger? Yes, Daughter, said he, with a sagacious Air, taking my Hand, and squeezing it, your Salvation is in great Danger, it is on the Brinks of a Precipice; one step farther would make it irretrievable; nothing but Providence, and his Ministers, can save you; if you will have Confidence in my Councils, possibly we may prevent it.

I trembled at what the Abbot said to me; I protested to him very submissively, I would pay an implicit Obedience to whatever he should please to advise. That's well, said he, with an Air of Satisfaction; let us begin then, but do not, through a false Modesty, conceal any-thing from me. I am going to recapitulate, and you must answer very frankly. I comprehended great Part of the Story, but your Emotion was such, I lost a

Thousand essential Circumstances ; recollect them again, and give me the most exact Detail you can, and if possible, describe the divers Attitudes during this dismal Transaction we are upon ; we must examine every-thing, and pursue it. Know, that nothing is more delicate than such an Affair. In a Word, a Gesture, a Look of the Eye, will give me an Insight ; nothing must be omitted that will help to clear up the Truth.

I was very observant to what the Abbot said, and repeated every-thing I had related to him before, more carefully than I did the first Time. He was every Moment interrupting me with his Questions. What did you think, said he, (when I was upon the Article of the Waistcoat) was the Reason, why *M. de St. Preuil* would unlose it ? Had you any Notion of the Matter ? Did you feel some Trouble then ? Did you observe, if that impudent Man fixed his Eyes upon your Breast ? Was not you moved, upon perceiving him look upon them with Pleasure ? As my Ideas never carried me so far, I told him, my Thoughts were only employed how to deliver myself from that *Tete-a-tete* which my Virtue dreaded. So much the better, said he, there is nothing bad, nothing reproachable on that Head. But we must avoid any fresh Temptations, and I shall insist upon a punctual Observance of the Rules I am going to prescribe, or never
more

more look upon me for your Director. I shall abandon you to your Perils without any farther Regard. Notwithstanding the great Friendship I have for you, it would be to no Purpose to come to me again, for I would not so much as hear you named to me any more.

I was frightened at the Manner in which he pronounced these Words. Determine, Sir, said I, determine my Fate. Alas! I am lost if your Goodness should be withdrawn from me. My Tears accompanied what my Tongue uttered. Take Courage, my Child, said he, since you are ready to give yourself up entirely to my Advice, and punctually to observe every Article of it, I shall make it a Point of Honour, as well as Friendship, to have you always under my Eye. Yes! you shall be my beloved Penitent, and I will pursue my Attention to your Affairs with the utmost Constancy; provided you never deviate in the least from the delicate Paths of Honour, I will be your Guide and never forsake you.

With great Transport, I thanked my amiable Director, and immediately requested with Impatience, what I should do to shun those Evils which threatened me. This he referred till the Day after the next. I must take Time, said he, to consider well this Affair, and, in the mean Time, be sure to keep upon your Guard, and if any Attempt

should be made upon your Virtue, make your Escape, come directly to me, but never let my Name be mentioned in the least. I will provide for your Safety, and against any Accident that may happen. After this good Counsel, which I regarded as an Oracle, I took my Leave of the Abbot, and returned home. *M. de St. Preuil*, who was not gone out, asked me in the same kind Tone he used to do, where I had been, and why I stayed so long, it being past our usual Dinner Time. I made the first Excuse which came into my Head, and sat me down to Dinner without any more Questions.

After Dinner was over, and we were alone, *M. de St. Preuil* would have entertained me with a Renewal of our Morning's Conversation, and began with praising my Beauty. I got up to go away, fearful of what might happen; but he took me by the Hand, and obliged me to sit down again. You are more grave than usual; Are you angry at my repeating what I have so often told you? Well! we'll talk no more about it then, but entertain ourselves with something more serious, and of more Importance. I have had for some Time an Intention of explaining myself; and if my Terms are agreeable, your Repose and mine will be determined by this Conference.

This was a shocking Moment, which I would not for all the World have been exposed

posed to, could I have prevented it, and very sorry in my own Mind the Abbot did not foresee it. I trembled, having been accustomed to comply in every-thing, to the Will of a Man I had always regarded as my Father. He was rough; and, as I said before, not used to make Love. It was a very delicate Crisis, and no easy Matter to be extricated from. I believed it would be best therefore to behave as I did the first Time, and determined to sooth and dissemble.

I had great Reason to pursue this Method; for whether it was his Constitution operated, or the Heat of his Repast transported him, but he began at once to tell me very plainly, what greatly alarmed me. He proposed me for his Friend, without the least Ceremony. That was all, Yes, or No, must decide the Matter, not a Moment to consider about it. I must either chuse his Heart or a Cloister. - Nothing is freer than Thought, said he, if you can like me, 'tis enough. I will settle upon you four thousand Livers *per Annum*, and on those Terms we will have a Contract drawn immediately. But if your Heart has nothing to say in my Favour, we must part this very Day; and the taking of the Vail will only shorten my Span; and, in good Truth, were I younger, Life is too short to be wasted in idle Hopes. Be assured, said he, rising up, it will be in vain to deliberate. *Allons!* Shall we go to

the Notary's, or must I carry you to the Convent.

I could not pretend to equivocate about my Option. I knew *M. de St. Preuil* too well to flatter myself with any Hopes. He had passed his Word, and that was irrevocable. I have told you before, my Aversion to a Convent. The Choice was frightful. I remembered, my Director advised me, in case my Virtue was in the least Danger, to make my Escape; which I was determined to do if possible. With this Project in my Head, I told him, I would get myself ready, and follow him immediately. But whether he suspected my Design, or would not give me Time for Reflection, he answered, I was better dressed than was necessary to visit a Notary, and presented me his Hand. He had certainly given his Directions before hand, every-thing seemed premeditated; the Chariot was at the Door, and I stepped into it, with that Uneasiness, which it is impossible to describe.

We arrived at a celebrated Notary's, and were introduced into his Office. I imagined, from the Familiarity of *M. de St. Preuil's* Reception, it was not the first Visit he had made to that House. *Mr. Bourcier* (which was the Name of the Notary) gave me a Wink, which I thought nothing of at that Time; but it came into my Mind afterwards with all its Malignity; and I never think

think of it, even to this Day, without a Blush. Would you believe, the Remembrance of such an Accident could make so strong an Impression upon one after so long a Time.

After whispering a Word or two in the Notary's Ear, *M. de St. Preuil* came up to me, as I was sitting in an Elbow-Chair by the Fire-side, almost distracted. Do you already repent your Compliance, said he, I am despairing for Love of you. I don't know what Answer I made, but he was satisfied with it. I thought it was best to seem complaisant, and not require too much Persuasion, having still a Notion of making my Escape. He was resolved to make a proper Use of the short Stay we made at the Notary's or risque his former Attempt.

The Contract did not take up much Time in Drawing, and being read over before it was signed, I found it ran in my Christian Name, without any Quality, and my Habitation was mentioned to be in the Rue *St. Dominique*, in the Parish of *St. Sulpice*. All this astonished me infinitely.

When *M. de St. Preuil* took Leave of the Notary, I concluded myself lost, and no Possibility left of executing my Design. But, Heaven, ever propitious to the Innocent, ordered it so, that a certain Duke's Coach, could not pass without *M. de St. Preuil's* Chariot drawing back a few Paces. I took

hold of this favourable Opportunity. While *M. de St. Preuil* was obliged to pay his Respects to this accidental Lord, I crossed the Street directly, under Pretence of going to the Vehicle which brought us, and as it was but four Steps to the Palace-Royal, I flew in immediately, fully determined to run up Stairs and enter the first Room I should see open. My Enterprize succeeded. The Duke *de* who, when he enters into Discourse, does not very soon finish, seized upon *M. de St. Preuil*, which gave me Time to get off. I walked across the Palace-Royal without looking behind me, and sent for a Hackney-Coach, into which I threw myself; and ordered the Man to drive me to the Abbot's. When I came there, I was in such a Trembling, my Spirits were in so great a Flurry, I don't know how to express it, and my Visit was as surprizing as it was satisfactory, when I related to him the Cause of it.

When I had given him an exact Account of this last Affair. So, so, my Child, said he, let me now mention what I have been providing, that we may avoid the Misfortunes which threatened you. I have already furnished an Apartment, in the Suburbs of *St. Honore*, where you will be safely concealed, for *M. de St. Preuil* will certainly set his Emmissaries at work to find you out if possible. I must pass for your Uncle, to prevent

prevent the malicious World from censuring my frequent Visits, which will be at least two or three Times a Week; be sure to remember, and say, you came from *Provence*, and being an Orphan, thought it most prudent to put yourself under the Care of your Uncle, and requested his Protection and Assistance in your unfortunate Situation, and pretend likewise, the Reason why I did not think proper to have you at my own House, was, because I judged it a Thing of too delicate a Nature; besides, the Disturbance which might be given to my pious Meditations, &c. This is your Story. We are allowed, for certain good Ends, to vary a little from Truth sometimes. As to your Manner of living, it will be plain, but very happy. That you may be free from Censure, I have made Choice of a holy Woman under Misfortunes, (whom I have known a long Time) to attend upon you, and it will be proper to shew this Woman Respect, for I have myself a Regard for her. You will find some little Employment, for your Amusement, as well as to keep you from Temptation. Fail not to go every Day to Mass, but stir not out the rest of the Day. All the necessary Conveniencies of Life are provided; and as to your Salvation, I will take Care of that myself, and by the blessing of Heaven, I doubt not, before two Years are at an End, to make your Happiness in

this World compleat, and to have no Fear about the next. You shall be my beloved Daughter, and I will make it my Felicity to promote your Happiness.

The Disposition he had made seem'd so very agreeable, I could not help expressing my Acknowledgments with some Transport, and the Abbot was pleased to see me so well satisfied. After we had chatted over these Affairs again for a few Minutes, I asked, if he did not think it proper to write to my Mother about providing me a Subsistence? He answered, that the very next Day he would inform her of every-thing which had happened. This promise, together with that of effectually preventing my ever falling into *M. de St. Preuil's* Hands again, made me very easy, and that I might be perfectly so, with regard to the latter, he told me, till the Search which would naturally be made after me was over, I must not stir a Step from Home; and that I might have no Uneasiness on account of the Enquiry, he added further, that he would write several Letters, and send them to a Friend of his, who lived many Leagues off, where they should be put into the Post, that they might seem to come from *Provence*. By these Letters I should justify to my Mother, and *M. de St. Preuil*, my secreting myself, on Account of the Persecutions I had endured. They will believe, said the Abbot, you are removed

to some very distant Place, and so take their Measures accordingly. Nothing I thought could be better contrived, and I again thanked my dear Director.

Your Highness cannot conceive, what a seducing Creature this Abbot was. How he commended the Steps I had taken, the artful Method he took to sooth my little Share of Vanity, and prevent my feeling that Uneasiness, which can hardly be avoided on taking so extraordinary a Course. On the contrary, I found myself at Ease, and this Change, which ought to have troubled me, was nothing more than an agreeable Novelty; and, I must own, when I reflected on the Necessity of acting in this manner, it did not a little contribute to that Tranquility of Mind, with which conscious Virtue never fails to crown her faithful Votaries.

The Abbot left me for a Moment alone, to give Directions about sending for the Woman he told me of. You had not, said he, as he was returning into the Room, Time to bring away your Linnen and other Apparatus for Dressing; we must provide some, added he, opening a Bureau, see, there's twenty Lewis d'Ors for Necessaries and daily Expences. I don't pretend to direct how it is to be laid out, I make you sole Mistress of it; when that is expended, we will try to provide you a Recruit. Nothing could be more engaging than this Proceeding,

ceeding, which touched me very sensibly. I assured this Man, who now appeared so amiable to me, I should make a proper Use of what he intrusted me with. And to improve his good Opinion, told him, I had been brought up to great Oeconomy, and should give him convincing Proofs of it ere long. He praised me again for this excellent Qualification, and said, next to Modesty, it was the best good Quality of a Woman.

I listened to my dear Director as to an Oracle, all he said had a certain Gracefulness in it, which induced one to love and adhere to him; even the Tone of his Voice, had an irresistible Charm in it, his Language was as pure as it was polite. I reflected within myself, what a fortunate Accident the falling into the Hands of so wise a Man was. But he made a Proposal soon after, which troubled me a good deal, and made me very uneasy. Though he used all the Address he was Master of; yet I could not bring myself to be inwardly of his Mind.

In speaking of the Danger a young Person runs, by being unacquainted with Mankind, and by not having sufficient Knowledge of Men to distrust their secret Designs, he told me, he would some other Time discourse longer and more fully on this Head; that the Subject was inexhaustible; and that it should be the principal Topic of his first Visit; but for the present, I shall only give you

you a Caution, by way of preventing a Misfortune you are liable to every Moment. This Town, added he, is full of Robbers, People, who are every Hour of the Day lurking about, and are ready upon all Occasions to impose upon and defraud all such as are ignorant of their Address and Subtilty. That Necklace, and Ear-rings, said he, they are such a Temptation, you run a very great Risque. I would advise my Child to take them off, and put them into your Pocket, or trust me with the Care of them; I will keep them very safe. I hung down my Head, and felt a very great Repugnance to part with my Jewels, which I was always excessively fond of. My Director, observed the Trouble I was in, and apprehended the Cause of it. Though he gave me only a gentle Rebuke, yet I was greatly concerned, and much ashamed, he should perceive my Reluctance at parting with my Jewels; without giving him Time therefore to proceed upon the Lecture he promised me, against minding of worldly Things, I began to take off my Diamonds, and asked a thousand Pardons for the Weakness I had shewn. To give him a further Proof of my Submission to his Advice, I gave him besides, out of my Pocket, other Diamonds, worth more than ten thousand Livers. The Idea I had conceived after I returned home, of making my Escape from *M. de St. Preuil*, as the Abbot

Abbot advised, made me think it a necessary Precaution to bring away all I conveniently could. I did not leave behind the Purse of a thousand Crowns in Gold my Mother gave me, which I had forgot when I was giving up my Jewels, and it was a very providential Thing I did not think of them at that Time, because, they prov'd of great Service to me on another Occasion I shall tell you of hereafter.

The Abbot commended my Docibility very much, and then said, to obviate any Inquietude I might be under about my Diamonds; if my Mother did not consider so well as she ought, about my present Situation, the Money he could raise with those Valuable Jewels might be employed to purchase me a handsom Income, and as they were legally my own, I need not have any Sort of Scruple about that Matter.

I did not then consider the Cunning of this holy Man, who, for twenty Lewis d'Ors, had piously purchased of me, Jewels, that were of more than twenty-thousand Livers value. Far from distrusting of him in my Heart, I looked upon the Pains he took to strip me, as an obliging Care, which in my own Mind I thought very kind of him.

The Moment I was dispossessed of what I was fonder of than any-thing else which belonged to me, Word was brought us, that the Woman the Abbot had sent for was
come.

come. I trembled every Joint of me, when I saw her enter. She had a most imperious, severe, rigid Look; and her Dress was agreeable to her Person, which I shall describe presently; but first, her Complexion was pale and yellow; her Eyes were half shut, and always prone to the Earth; her Nose was pinched up, and as narrow at bottom as it was at top; her Mouth was from Ear to Ear, and glewed at the Corners with a Sort of cruſted Flegm, from whence, as ſhe opened it, a kind of thick yellow Gum was filtrated; her Cheeks were raiſed very high by two imperial Bones, the Exaltation of which, were glorified with a curious Varniſh like red Marble; her ſmooth Chin was peaked, and terminated with a large red Whart, which was almoſt hid by a thouſand wreaths of yellow Fleſh veined of different Colours. I had like to have forgot her Eyebrows, which were of a dirty Black mixed with Grey, heightened by a capacious Wrinkle which over-shadowed this Part of her Face. Her hollow Temples were of a blueiſh Green, and ſerved as a Shade to her withered Features. A Nun's Coif covered this pious Head, and a large Chaplet of Beads, which were made of I know not what, ſerved for a Necklace round her wrinkled Throat; in the middle of this Chaplet hung a wooden Croſs, with an Ivory Crucifix, and ſhe had a ſtarched Band on, which ſtuck cloſe to her

two

two narrow Shoulders. The Waist of Sister *de Calvaire* (which was the religious Name given this Woman, by way of Sirname, but I could never learn for what Reason, as she was a Widow) appeared of an extravagant length. With respect to her Hands and Arms, it was not possible to distinguish them, they were hid under a Pair of Sleeves of an immoderate Length, which concealed them from the Eyes of the Curious, though I don't know if that was any Loss; for my own Part, I would have given a good deal, to have had her whole Body out of Sight, and I am persuaded, this holy Sister would have been a Gainer by it, and the Public no loser.

As soon as this Woman was enter'd the Room; come hither Sister, said the Abbot; this is my Niece I spoke to you about Yesterday; I commit her to your Care, she is a very good Child, and has been extremely well educated; I hope she will take a Liking to you, and I am very certain you cannot dislike her, to whom, I shall expect you pay a particular Regard, as she belongs to me. My Director added further, upon perceiving I looked melancholy, and that the Tears stood in my Eyes; I charge you not to make her any ways uneasy, if you do, it will greatly disoblige me; she will always do what is right; her being my Niece, is sufficient to prevent her ever departing from her

her Duty. I will not be wanting in my Visits to her as often as I conveniently can ; I promised her Relations to be a Father to her, and I design to fulfil my Promise faithfully.

Sister *de Calvaire*, who stood like a Stock all this while, moved her Eyes at last, and casting a Glance upon me *en passant*, replied, it is enough Sir, whatever you command I shall be punctually obeyed. I shall treat my Sister, your Niece, like a second Self, and I shall love her with the Bowels of a Christian ; as for the rest, for ever blessed be the Name of the Lord.

I fetched a deep Sigh at the End of this Answer, and imagined this devout Companion of mine would not prove a very entertaining one ; but the Hopes of seeing my Director often, whom I loved more and more, was some Consolation to me ; and the more so, because he told me, before I went away with Sister *de Calvaire*, I should have an Apartment to myself, and be absolutely my own Mistress ; and added further, if it should happen, contrary to his positive Orders, that that Woman made me the least uneasy, I had nothing to do but inform him, and he would redress me at once ; and that I should be convinced by his Behaviour, on such an Occasion, how much he had my Tranquility at Heart. Go, my Child ! cry'd he, squeezing my Hand, before it is long

long I will tell you more. Let us commit every Thing to the Care of the Lord, he will be our Guide and Comforter. He pronounced these last Words very loud, and I easily perceived his Intention was to have them heard. They did not escape Sister *de Calvaire*, for she answered, *So be it*, and crossed herself as she was going down the Stairs. A Hackney Coach was waiting for us at the Door, which we got into. My new Governante set herself by me, and taking out her Rosary, she said, let us pray to the Lord to prosper our Journey. I made her no Answer; my Heart was so full, I had more Inclination to cry than to pray, and it was almost dark.

We arrived in a few Minutes at my destined Habitation, which was furnished in a very plain but convenient Manner. The Lodging was divided into four Parts, my Bed-chamber was separated from Sister *de Calvaire's* by an Anti-chamber, which I was very glad of, for I frankly declare, the Air and Behaviour of that Woman was so very disagreeable, I determined to avoid her Company as much as I possibly could, and it seemed no difficult Matter, as the Rooms were contrived, but I was ignorant, that many of these Devotees, are not very fond of Retirement, and are often a Burthen to themselves. I did not know they were sometimes so low spirited as to be almost
out

out of their Senses, and wanted to come into the World again (which they pretended to despise) for Relief. Sister *de Calvaire* was one of these, she hated to be alone, which I discovered the very first Day, and was sorry for it.

As soon as my too pious Governante had shewn me my Apartment, she ask'd for Money to go and provide Supper; as I had no small Change, I took out my Purse, and gave her a Lewis d'Or. She laughed at the Sight of so large a Piece, and cry'd, *Vierge Marie*, this will support our miserable Lives for some Time, and went out. While she was gone I took a Survey of the Lodgings. All the Furniture was new. The Kitchen was by my Governante's Chamber; the Entrance to my Apartment was through the Anti-chamber, and I had a private back Door to go out at besides, that if I had an Inclination to see any Body without the Knowledge of the good Sister, I could easily do it. But this, I did not immediately discover. The Abbot, who provided this Lodging for me, did, by his Conduct, soon make it very visible, he had his Reasons for having every-thing disposed in this Manner.

I found in my Chamber, upon Examination, a large Chest, in which was Table-Linnen and other Necessaries, for the Side-board, two Silver Covers for the Table, a Salt-seller of the same, two Candlesticks and
a Pair

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a Pair of Snuffers of *French* Plate. I was inwardly pleased with these Things, not so much for the Elegancy or Conveniency of them, but because it shewed the Donor's Regard for me. As I had been accustomed to much better, these Trifles could not make any Impression upon me. There was great Plenty and Magnificence in the House where I was brought up; and if any Thing surprized me, it was my Fall, and being reduced to this middling Way.

Whilst I was taking this Review, Sister *de Calvaire* returned with a Basket of Provisions. As soon as I heard the Door open, I clapped myself down into an Elbow-chair, because she should not catch me prying about the Rooms, and think me too curious.

Indeed, Madam, I find you very prettily employed, cry'd this Devotee in a scolding Tone. How you sit at your Ease there. What! no Cloth laid! Oh, ho! did you think I was gone to the Procession, or to Ring the Bell? O, what Laziness! I take the Trouble to provide for the Family, when I return, nothing is done. Pray let it never be so again. Christian Charity obliges us to assist one another, and if you don't know any better, you must be taught, that we may have none of these Complaints for the future. Come, to our Business, do your Part, and I will do mine, I'll go and get Supper ready, I have eat nothing To-day,
and

and Heaven does not require more of us than we are able to bear.

After this rough Exhortation, the Devotee went grumbling out of the Room. For my Part, I fell a crying. I had never been talked to in this Manner before, and it was the more shocking, having been told I should be my own Mistress, and accountable for my Actions to none but my Director. I judged by this Beginning, what a cruel Life I must expect to lead. This Reflection was no sooner made, but I began to hate Sister *de Calvaire* with such a perfect Aversion, Time has not yet effaced it. However, I laid my Cloth, and though I was vexed at the Heart, I would not let what my Governante had been so angry about give her Cause to talk to me in that Manner again. A few Minutes after, she came in, and I had acquitted myself of a Business I never was employed about before. After she had placed a Dish upon the Table, I drew my Chair to it, intending to get my Supper without regarding of her. I laid but one Plate, Knife, and Fork, not imagining this Woman, whom I looked upon as my Servant, was to sit at Table with me. Ha, ha! said she, bursting into an ironical Laugh, this is something new, What! I must have no Supper, I suppose? Who told you so, said I, without looking up? piqued at her mocking Laughter, and still more at her setting herself

self by me. Have you not a Kitchen to eat in, added I? Yes, to be sure, reply'd Sister *de Calvaire* in a Passion, do you expect I should? I fancy you take me for your Servant, Miss, by your Way of Talking? Pray undeceive yourself, if you please; the Gentleman, your Uncle, has placed me here to take Care of your Conduct, and to have an Eye to your Actions; as for any Thing else, your most obedient. I never was a Servant to any one but my Maker, and I shall not begin now to be your's.

I judg'd, by this Proceeding, she was either authorized to behave in such a Manner, or was naturally haughty and presumptuous. The Thoughts of being thus subjugated, alarmed me so, my Tears flow'd afresh. I could not bring my little Stock of Vanity to submit to her's. Well! said I, rising from the Table, be Mistress then, if Father *Traï-nasseau* has put you here for that Purpose; we will see, nevertheless, if your Power is as great as you pretend; and till I am better informed, let me tell you, I shall not pay you the least Submission; I had rather fall into the cruellest Extremities, than be under the Subjection of so ill-natured a Woman.

After I had pronounced these Words, I took a Candle, and went into my Closet, where I wept most bitterly. One Moment's Chagrin, is sufficient to recal to one's Mind all our past Misfortunes. I recollected the
 . unhappy

unhappy Circumstances of my Birth, and the terrible Consequences of my Mother's irregular Conduct, which I paid so dear for now. This introduced others to my Imagination more fatal. After having passed for the Daughter of a Man of Condition, where I lived very agreeably, was it not excessive hard to see myself degraded, from so advantageous a Station, and then to be reduced to a Necessity of bearing the false Title of Niece, to a Man, who might abandon me at Will, and by that Means plunge me into the utmost Misery? What dismal Reflections these! I had a good deal of Spirit, and was a little impatient. The frightful Ideas I formed to myself of what might happen hereafter, afflicted me so, I spent the Night in Tears and Lamentations, and was deaf to every-thing.

Sister *de Calvaire* was much surprized at my Resentment, and perhaps more so at the Contempt I shewed to all she said. She attempted at first to proceed in the old Strain, and, with an Air of Authority, bid me go into my Bed-chamber. But I declared very positively, I never would submit to her Directions; so she desisted for the present. Some Moments after, she returned. Her religious Pride was a little mortified, I don't doubt, and put her upon thinking how she had best act. The Continuance of my Grief moved her; and she was besides afraid, not

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without Reason, that I should complain to the Abbot; she therefore began to sooth and flatter, endeavouring to persuade me to go to Bed. But nothing would do, I was enraged at her vile Behaviour, and the little Consideration she had shewn for me the first Day. I told her very peremptorily, in one Word, to leave me, or I would alarm all the Neighbours. This terrified her so, she retired, telling me, she was going to pray, that Heaven would inspire me with better Sentiments.

It was no sooner Day, but I began to dress my Head, determined to go and complain to my Director, of the ill Treatment I had endured the Night before. Sister *de Calvaire*'s restless Spirit made her very watchful; she no sooner suspected my Design, but she came, and endeavoured to prevail with me to alter my Intentions. My Resolution was unchangeable, nor would I deign to answer her. Would your Highness believe it? This cunning Devotee, imagining I was determined to make my Complaint, and that she should be called to an Account for this vile Behaviour, pretended she would let me be Mistress, and I might use her as I pleased. I thought when she left me, of her being retired to her own Room, and I was for going forth. But how astonished was I to find the Door locked! I supposed she had taken away the Key to prevent my going out;

out ; and therefore persisted no farther in her Intreaties. Imagining this to be the Case, I went to her Apartment, where I thought she was, intending to ask her for the Key. But the Coast was clear, no-body to be found. I immediately suspected her Design, and the Consequence of it. The just Apprehensions I had, that she would prejudice against me the only Protector I had in the World, made me attempt all possible Means to procure my Liberty. I broke two Knives about the Lock, in Hopes of opening the Door ; and spent above two Hours in such fruitless Efforts, but all in vain. What a shocking Thing must any one think it to be in my Situation ; a young Creature, who had been tenderly brought up, not above seventeen Years of Age, to find herself a Prisoner, instead of being independent. Such Ideas as these renewed my Tears and Complaints. I thought myself abandoned by all the World, and began to shriek out. I looked through the Key-hole, from time to time, to see if my Cries drew no-body to my Assistance. I fancied I heard a Person coming up the Stairs ; and looking again as well as I could through the Key-hole, distinguished a Man in a Night-gown, advancing towards the Chamber-door on his Tip-toe, as if he was listening. Without considering the Consequence of making fresh Complaints, or how this Affair would end, I cry'd aloud

again, and said, how miserable am I, to be confined in this manner, at my Age, to be thus rigorously treated most undeservedly, and by an Inferior too, who has no sort of Authority over me! Will not Heaven have Compassion upon my Innocence, and send some Friend to succour me, and drag me out of this Place of Oppression? What grateful Acknowledgments will I not repay, if my righteous Prayers are heard.

Just as I finished these Words, a Voice from the other Side of the Door, said, I hear you, be pacified, my dear Creature; I am touched to the Heart with your Tears, and will exert my utmost Endeavours to serve you; but let us first consider how we may secure your Escape. I will come as soon as I perceive a convenient Opportunity, and give three gentle Raps upon your Chamber-door; do you descend immediately, and you shall be carefully concealed till Then the Voice suddenly ceased, without concluding. I directly judged, from the Noise I heard, that somebody had surprised him. Alas! what I apprehended proved but too true. The Abbot himself, along with Sister *de Calvaire*, were that Instant coming up the Stairs, and caught a Man talking to me through the Key-hole. My Director, prepossessed by this malignant Devotee, took upon him the Authority of a real Uncle, as well as that of his own Character; and reprimanded

primanded this Person very severely, threatening him with a Complaint to the Magistrate. I retired into my Apartment, ignorant if any Answer was made. My Director was presently before my Sight, coming up to me in a rough, abrupt Manner. I, who but a few Minutes before desired to see him, wanting to make my Complaints, found myself so confounded at his stern Presence, and angry Looks, I cast my Eyes down to the Ground, like a guilty Criminal taken in the Fact. It looked as if I had conspired with this wicked Devotee against myself, to make her malicious Practices succeed; it was behaving to her Wish.

I was soon convinced, why this vile Devotee went out, and locked me in; it was, for Fear I should prejudice my Director against her; she therefore took the Advantage of going to him first, and tell him the wickedest Things of me she could invent; how I had conceived the greatest Aversion to her; how I had taken it into my Head, the Moment after I was got into my new Habitation, to make an Offer to ramble out by myself, which she would not suffer; and that I therefore treated her very barbarously. Her Malice did not stop here; she very artfully made him believe I held a Correspondence with a Man; though she did not speak it in absolute Terms, she let fall such broad Hints, as would occasion the strongest Suspicion.

However, this Artifice, shameful as it was, would not have succeeded ; one Word would have been sufficient to have discovered the base Deceit ; but, my unlucky discoursing with the Stranger on the other Side of the Door, confirmed her Report. The Abbot, in a severe Tone, asked who the Man was he had surprized talking with me, and what Business I had with him ; though I gave him a faithful Account how the Thing happened, he thought I was not sincere, and chid me for it, requiring me to talk to him with more Confidence ; and told me very positively, if I persisted in endeavouring to finesse with him, he should be obliged to take such a Course, I should not at all approve.

These Threats threw me into Despair, I cried bitterly, and I believe my Director was moved at the Condition he saw me in, and ordered Sister *de Calvaire* to leave the Room. What makes my dear Child weep so ? said he, Why do you afflict yourself in this Manner ? What can I think ? You must certainly have some very extraordinary Motive for this extravagant Sorrow ? Where is that Regard you used to profess for me ? From whence proceeds this Silence ? Do you no longer look upon me as your Friend, as another Father, which Heaven had raised you up ? O Sister ! recollect yourself, put away from your Imagination, all those dangerous fatal Ideas,

Ideas, which will be your Destruction; you are upon a Precipice; in the Name of all the Holy Angels go not one Step farther; there will be no Pardon, you must be eternally lost.

This Discourse, instead of calming my Tears and Sorrow, only augmented them. What have I done Sir, said I, sobbing, to be treated with so much Rigour? Am I not miserable enough, to be reduced to the deplorable Condition I find myself in, but I must also be loaded with the most atrocious Calumnies? Why was I not told the Condition I was destined to. I should then have expected it, and by a patient Resignation of myself, had been prepared for the Treatment I have suffered. Yes Sir, why was I not told, you had given the Woman I was placed with an absolute Authority over me; and, instead of her serving me, that I was to be her complaisant Companion, I should have submitted to the Yoke. It would most certainly have galled me to the Soul, being little accustomed to such Extremities; and tho' I should have condescended so far, I would not have put it in the Power of that Woman, by Means of her Superiority, to ruin me in your good Opinion, and suppose Falsities that never were, and which I ought not so much as ever to be suspected of, if any one would but consider in the least the Party I have taken.

This Discourse, which was uttered in that affecting Manner, which Sorrow always inspires, proved persuasive, and had a favourable and sudden Effect. The Abbot was moved, and taking both my Hands, with a compassionate Look, asked me, If it was possible I could be treated with such Disrespect, and if Sister *de Calvaire* could have the Confidence to impose upon him? Truth will ever be prevailing. I gave so plain and natural an Account of this wicked Devotee's Behaviour to me the Night before, and desired to tell it all to her Face, with such Resolution, my Director readily believed it all to be true; assuring me, he never could give his Consent to those Proceedings. And as a convincing Proof of it, he called Sister *de Calvaire*, and reprimanded her very severely for reporting such scandalous Falsities, and peremptorily commanded her to behave in a better Manner for the future, and not give me the least Reason to complain; adding, if she did, he would directly discharge her, and she should repent it the longest Day she lived.

I can't help owning, that the Sight of Sister *de Calvaire*'s melancholy Countenance at this Reprimand, cleared up mine. I could not help feeling a secret Satisfaction in seeing her so perfectly mortified. The Abbot gave her to understand, the Station he appointed her, was to wait upon, not controul me; and

and added farther, he would have her consider well, whether the Thing was agreeable ; if not, to tell him so, because he had twenty Girls at his Devotion, who all of them aspired at the Hopes of being placed by his Hand, and only waited for such a favourable Opportunity. This Alternative frightened my Devotee. She wept, she ask'd my Pardon, and promised to conduct herself so obsequiously henceforward, I should have no Cause to complain. I was content with these Concessions ; so Peace was concluded, and no more said about it.

What I have now related, was all the Conversation I had with my Director upon his first Visit. He promised to come again next Day, and left me well satisfied with his Goodness, and well pleased at getting the better of a Woman, who, at first setting-out, treated me so imperiously.

Notwithstanding what had pass'd, I apprehended she would, in her Turn, upon the very first Occasion upbraid me : But I was surprized at her civil Deportment ; she appeared as gentle, and as humble, as she had been reserved and haughty ; and observant to the least Tittle. After the Abbot was gone, I never saw her again till she came to ask, what I would please to have for Dinner, and then opened the Windows next the Street, that I might amuse myself, she said, whilst she went to Market. When Dinner

was ready, I commended her Care and Diligence. She had laid only one Cover, and stood behind me. Her great Humility touched me. The sorrowful Air which accompanied all her Actions softened me; therefore, to let her see I was reconciled, I made her sit at Table with me, assuring her, if she behaved well, she should never find any Cause for Dissatisfaction.

I was really reconciled in good Earnest, but she was a meer Hypocrite; and to be a Hypocrite and a wicked Woman is pretty much the same Thing. The Sequel of my Story will, I believe, illustrate the Truth of this Position.

The next Morning, when my Director came to see me, I commended Sister *de Calvaire*, almost as much as I had discommended her the Night before. This Change puffed up his Vanity, telling me with a Smile, he had the Skill of moulding Hearts, having brought about much more difficult Conversions. And added, it was possible, in Time, he might have an Opportunity of giving me a convincing Proof of his Art.

After some little Conversation on this Subject, he asked me, by Way of Discourse, if the Person who talked to me on the other Side the Door, had never attempted to procure the same Advantage again. I answered him very truly, I did not know, for I was the remaining Part of the Day in my Chamber
with

with Sister *de Calvaire*, reading, or working, and knew nothing of him.

So much the better, my dear Child, said the Abbot, looking stedfastly upon me; Men are deceitful; a virtuous Person should always avoid them. Be assured, their seducing Discourse tends only to ensnare you; and when any one is so unfortunate, to hearken to their perfidious Allurements, they generally repent it all their Lives after. There is no Accident so frightful, and so much to be dreaded, as an insinuating Lover; to listen to them, to permit them to approach you, is putting it in their Power to destroy you. They seem to desire nothing more than your Love, which, when obtained, in Lieu of that Innocence you are robbed of, you will be overwhelmed with Misfortunes and Complaints. For the Imagination of the Unguarded, are touched with a Fondness, which grows too insensibly to be resisted.

However, I would not have you think I am an Enemy to the innocent Pleasures of Society, said the Abbot, looking tenderly at me. No, my dear *Agnes*, I am not a Tyger. There are Laws prescribed to Nature as well as Virtue, and it would be tyrannical to prohibit all. I know the Allowances we ought to make a young Person, disposed by Constitution to certain Desires. Some Enjoyments may be permitted, provided you have a Man of my Function for

your Guide. But these very Enjoyments will become enormous Sins, if they are tasted through Inticement or Persuasion. The Senses, if not stopped, will overflow like a Torrent, but the Hand which endeavours to make this salutary Fence, ought to be so prudent and able, in preventing Virtue from being Ship-wrecked, as not to risque its sinking, by prescribing too strict Bounds to the Course of the Passions, which would grow impetuous, occasion a dangerous Reflex, and ruin all. Like a River, which of Necessity must have its Course. So the warm Passions of Youth must have some Way to transpire. To stop them without Discretion, would be absolute Destruction. We must let them evaporate, by having their proper Channel. Too much, or too little Restraint, would be equally dangerous.

I say then, my dear *Agnes*, continued the Abbot, I am not an Enemy to certain inward Sensations, which Nature inspires, and which are Part of its Essence; I only condemn the bad Use which is daily made of them. Why are we so rigid to hinder the Progress of these Sensations, which are sometimes stronger than they ought to be, but because, by the Abuse that would be made by a tacit Approbation of them, a Penitent may run herself into such Inconveniencies, from which it would be a difficult Matter to extricate her. The Director would

would by that Means cherish them, he who knows the World, who knows the human Heart, and has continual Proofs at the Tribunal, of the Disorders and Mischiefs attending those Hearts, which are a Prey to, and drawn away by their blind Senses; and it would be suffering those who commit their most intimate Secrets to him, to run an infallible Risque of falling into the Precipice. And there is not a more unpardonable Crime, than not to prevent an Evil we are morally certain will happen.

Let us come to a right Application, continued my perfidious Director, whom I thought, at that Time, a very worthy Man. When I advised you to leave the House you was brought up in. Why did I do it? Because I foresaw what would happen. Tho' a young Person is endowed with innate Modesty, it suffers much under the best Education, when the Passions rise in Aid to subdue it. Honour, like an able Pilot, guards it from Rocks and Sands. Though his Skill be great, he cannot always brave the Storm; he resists it to the last, but the Waves redouble their Force, and strike the Rudder from his Hand; the Vessel sinks, and all is lost. You resisted *M. de St. Preuil* once, you resisted him twice; but the third Time, Nature would have betrayed you. There are some Moments when our own Strength becomes our Weakness. Then is
any

any one easily surprized; and in such like Cases, nothing is more common than to see them yield.

If that had been your Misfortune, my dear *Agnes*, how shocking the Consequence! The Heart would soon have been made familiar with the Crime. It is very natural for a Person who never was in Love, to be delighted with any one, who makes them sensible of Pleasures they were unacquainted with before. The more Modesty you preserve, the more Honour, and consequently the more Tranquillity. In Time, you might have had your Punishment from the same Hand that flattered you at first. The Esteem *M. de St. Preuil* formerly pretended, would have vanished, and his Love ceased in course. Why did I call it Love! He never could have any from the Moment he first perpetrated his criminal Intentions. The quiet Possession of a Pleasure often degenerates into Lukewarmness; especially when there remains nothing more to be desired, Disgust always ensues; and if the Sentiments of your Lover once came to that pass, which, together with the secret Reasons him we are now talking of had for his Disregard, would have made him cast you off, and possibly thrown you into Despair, and Despair naturally leads the Way to what is most shocking.

Agnes

Agnes, I foresaw all these Things, and like an affectionate Guide, who knows the Ground where the Road is dangerous, and how to avoid it, by pointing out one more secure, have conducted you into this safe Retreat. Though it is not strowed with Flowers, like the slippery Path I have prevented your falling into; it is at least solid, and leads to a more peaceful State, more to be desired, than all the noisy Pleasures of the World, which are no sooner tasted, but you wish never to have known them. Yes, my dear Child, continued this hypocritical Director (squeezing my Hands which he had continued to hold between his) you have nothing to do but hearken to me, and to me alone. I will be to you, what I am to all my distinguished, my beloved Penitents. The Body and the Soul enjoy with me the Happiness which is proper for them. I know how to take Care of your temporal as well as spiritual Interest. Every Age, like every Season, has its Duties; Would it not be ridiculous to expect it should be hot in Winter? So with Regard to Youth; no one would desire a young Person should be moulded with icy old Age.

If your Highness had seen, with what an Air of Triumph the Abbot pronounced these last Words, you would not have been surprized at the Effect they had upon me. The Eye of this Man was sparkling and persua-
sive.

five. My Prepossession was so extravagant, it seemed as if Heaven spoke through his Mouth. Though, in Truth, I understood only Part of his Discourse, but that which I did comprehend, prejudiced me greatly in Favour of such charming Doctrine, as I conceived his to be, even from the first Moment I went to confess to him. My former Confessor terrified me about a few trifling Failings I was subject to. But the first Time I went to the Abbot on this Errand, I found myself greatly relieved, and there are many who are not very severe. In departing from his Confessional, I found myself quite comforted, as I said before. Formerly, I trembled when I was to approach the Sacrament, and returned with my Mind full of Doubts and Despair. Now I went with Eagerness, it was a Festival Day with me, and I wished to have it oftener.

The latter Part of our Conversation turned upon Things less interesting. My Director was too sensible a Man to fright me, in the Beginning with entire new Maxims. He told me at Parting, he would see me again in two Days, and in the mean Time, advised me to send for what Necessaries I wanted; and upon this Occasion told me, as he did before, when my Money was expended, to inform him, and he would provide more.

The next Morning, I made a Memorandum of what I wanted, and sent Sister *de Calvaire*

Calvaire to purchase them for me. She was no sooner gone down, but I heard somebody tapping at the Door of my Wardrobe. I fancied this Woman had forgot some-thing, and knowing I was in my Closet, came that Way to save me the Trouble of going round the Apartment to let her in. But how great was my Astonishment to see a well-dress'd Cavalier advancing towards me. The Colour came into my Face, and it immediately occured to my Mind what my Director had said to me with regard to Men, who stroll about like Wolves seeking whom they can destroy. I ran away as fast as I could, shrieking, not considering I had left my Door open, and by that Means put myself in the Power of him I was shunning in such Confusion. But, what could be expected from a young Girl, perfectly innocent? I was so terrified, I had not the Power to think.

The *Incognito*, not expecting such a Reception, was retiring very fast, crying out, O Lord Miss! if I have disturbed you, I shall be distracted. Upon hearing these Words, I thought he had been gone far enough; turning my Head therefore, and not seeing him, I ventured to the Door, intending to fasten it, but the Cavalier, now grown bolder, returned the instant I did, so that we met directly. I shall be very unhappy Miss, said he, (approaching me with a timorous

morous Air) if I have occasioned you the least Uneasiness, permit me to ask ten thousand Pardons, and at the same Time relate the Reasons, which pushed me to shew the great Desire I had of offering my Service. I am the Person who talked from the Outside of the other Door, that Day I was alarmed with your shocking Complaints. I had then a Glimpse of you, since which I am a Stranger to Repose, nor can I obtain any, till I am informed from your own Mouth, if you are any happier; or if it is in my Power to serve you, there is nothing in this World I am capable of performing, but I would gladly undertake to convince you of my Passion.

What he said, was delivered in so soft and polite a Manner, and was really so engaging, it might have been thought ridiculous of me, not to have returned a civil Answer. Tho' this Cavalier was not young, there was a certain Agreeableness in his Countenance, which is taking at every Age. His Shape was easy, his Address noble, and with the most Cavalier Air imaginable, he preserved so respectful a Behaviour, made it impossible to suspect him, or be displeased with his Discourse.

Thus prejudiced in his Favour, I did not scruple to make him an Answer, thanking him for his obliging Offers. I told him the Cause of that Disquiet I formerly had was
ceased,

ceased, and no Sort of Uneasiness remained. He desired to know, if he might flatter himself with the Hopes of his Visits not being displeasing to me. I was very much perplexed, not knowing how to answer him, for he had requested this Favour of me, with an Earnestness so pleasingly expressed, I was at a Loss how to refuse, and yet I dare not disclose my Reasons. In that Case, I must have owned my Dependance upon a Man I ought to regard, or pretend I was afraid of the Woman that lived with me. Either of these Excuses would have humbled my little Vanity, so I held my Tongue, and made no Reply.

I easily conceive Miss, said Mr. *Incognito*, the Favour I have entreated, is not agreeable; your Silence convinces me. I read in that embarrassed Countenance, the unwelcomeness of my Visit. Tell me, whatever you determine, I will absolutely submit to it. I also further declare, if my being here is any ways troublesome, I will retire with the same Eagerness I undertook the Discovery. Yes Miss! I have so great a Regard for you, it shall oblige me to relinquish a Happiness, I have aspired after ever since I discovered your being in this House. How happy should I be, could I convince you of this. Dare I flatter myself, you will do Justice to the Purity of my Sentiments, and put some little Confidence
in

in a Man, who is interested in every Thing which concerns you, and desires nothing so much as putting it to the Proof.

I was so ashamed and confounded, I kept Silent for some Time. At last, pardon my Concern, Sir, said I, almost afraid to look up at him, I protest I tremble for Fear you should be surprized; besides, I am not accustomed to such flattering Compliments, and much less in a Condition to listen to them. I am well persuaded of the Sincerity of your Civilities, but I live in a Retirement, which will not admit of any Correspondence. If I am found alone with a Man, what will the World imagine? and besides the giving Occasion for Scandal, I shall risque being caught again by an Uncle who would not hearken to any Justification. Since you are the Gentleman who talked to me before, you ought to remember him, and be able to judge from what has happened, how miserable I must be should he discover us together again.

After I had finished these Words, I said no more, and would have retired, but the Cavalier prevented me again. I foresaw every Thing that could happen, said the *Incognito*, lowering his Voice. I know how I expose myself; and if your Uncle should find out this Proceeding, my Life would hardly excuse it. But Miss! the ardent Desire I had to see you, and make a tender
of

of my Service, in the Opinion I was, that it might be of Use, after what your Complaints occasioned me to suggest, 'twas this Idea got the better of all other Considerations. However, make yourself easy, I have placed a Footman in Ambush at the Door, who will, by a Signal, give me Notice, if your Relation, or the Woman who waits upon you, should come. I have watched these three Days, for the happy Minute I now enjoy. Ah! could I but be believed, added he, with a Cavalier Air, we might make an Advantage of the present Opportunity. Tell me sincerely, I cannot think the Happiness you pretend is real. If it is truly so in good Earnest, own it to me frankly. Upon my Word and Honour you will not repent it, but most certainly will applaud yourself for honouring me with your Confidence.

Whilst the *Incognito* was displaying his persuasive Eloquence, I was considering what Answer to make. If by Chance such an Opportunity of talking to me as this, had fallen in his Way the Day he found me so miserable, I don't know what might have happened; but this was no favourable moment for him. Being at that Time well satisfied with my Uncle, and reconciled to my Governante, I therefore stuck to my Text.—I assured him I was very happy, that I had nothing to wish for, and the greatest
Proof

Proof he could give of the Regard he professed, was to leave me immediately, and never attempt another Opportunity of speaking to me; if he did, it would not only disoblige me greatly, but I should also make it my Endeavour to put it absolutely out of his Power.

I flattered myself, after so peremptory a Reply, Mr. *Incog.* would have made his Bow, and departed. But, this Man was not so easily rebuff'd. And can you be so hard-hearted, said he (throwing himself about my knees) thou beautiful Angel, to be the Death of a Lover, who lives only by looking on you? What have I done, cruel Creature, to be treated thus inhumanly? Why did you let me behold that adorable Face? Before I beheld it, I lived a solitary Life, indifferent to every Thing. My peaceful Soul, till that fatal Moment, despised Love's Darts, but now I am wounded even to Death, if deprived of the Sight of those bewitching Charms. Would you punish the Crime your Eyes have created? Either suffer me to disclose the Ideas your Beauty has inspired, or permit me to expire at your Feet.

I was not in a Situation to understand such Sort of Language as this, and if I had, I am persuaded, it would have made but little Impression upon me, and I believe, I should in the End have treated it with Contempt, had he been a more reasonable Creature.

But,

But, when he found I would no longer listen to his extravagant Protestations, he rose up in a Fury, and fastened the Door, and I thought, looked very wild with his Eyes; then drawing his Sword, told me, if I persisted in this rigorous Treatment, he would immediately stab himself before my Face, and I should have Reason to reproach myself for his Death so long as I lived. I vow to your Highness I trembled. Stop, Sir, said I, have Pity on my Youth and Innocence; sheath your Sword; I promise to see you again when I conveniently can. No, no cry'd this terrible *Incognito*, die I must. I am but too sensible what you intend by this Compassion. O thou cruel — ! you only desire to rid yourself of me, and regard not if I perish, the Instant I am out of your Sight. In uttering these Words, the frightful Rapier was continually pointed to his Breast, every Motion of this furious Mortal made me quake. I fancied I saw him gasping at my Feet. In all my Days, I never felt such Uneasiness. My Fright was so dreadful, I did not know how I could possibly support myself.

It is impossible to tell, how this Tragic-Comic Scene would have ended, had it not been for the unfortunate Return of Sister *de Calvaire*, who appeared all at once. She entered by the other Door, and I suppose the Signal I mentioned was not rightly understood;

derstood. The dismal Apprehensions I was under, made me yield to his Conditions ; so that, to appease this Man of Desperation, I promised to open my Door to him the first Time I was alone ; and, as an Assurance of the Performance of my Promise, he desired I would give him leave to kiss my Hand. According to all Appearance, from this Favour he would have proceeded to another, and so on. The Arrival of the Devotee, however, put an End to this embarrassing Catastrophe. Though I was thus extricated from the greatest Danger my Virtue could possibly be in, I found myself soon plunged into an Abyss of Perplexity and Trouble.

I expected this Woman would have discarded Mr. *Incog.* immediately ; but she disappointed my Expectations. The Moment she entered, I threw myself (frighted as I was) into her Arms. O my Goodness ! said she, with a hypocritical Tenderness, I would not spoil Sport ; you was with that Gentleman before, and may remain with him, I have nothing to say to it ; Are you not your own Mistress ? She then turned away, I followed her, much surprized at this Behaviour, and would have explained the whole Affair, just as it happened, and persuaded her to put my terrible Lover out of my Closet. I did not introduce him, said she, 'twas you let him in, and therefore, may do what you think most proper. By our Agreement, I

was

was not to trouble myself about your Actions, and I shall maintain that Agreement; I would not be guilty of the contrary, for the World.

I judged, from her peevish Manner of speaking, she had not forgot the Chagrin I occasioned her, and that she would not be wanting in her Endeavours, to make me sensible of it, the first Opportunity. This Reflection made me very unhappy, it brought to my Mind the deplorable State I was reduced to. From these Reflections, I proceeded to the Motives that had been the Occasion, but not without shedding many Tears. I reproached myself for being separated from my Mother, and lamented it very sincerely. It was my own Fault, I ought to have flown for Succour to her only; and she being the original Cause of my Misery, it was therefore much more natural for her to support me than a Stranger, who might from one Moment to another alter his Sentiments and Behaviour, and abandon me to my unhappy Fate. This Thought, made a very strong Impression upon my Imagination, in so much, that I immediately took a Resolution, which I soon after put in Execution. Thus was I, in a confused Manner, racking my Brains, as I sat in Sister *de Calvaire's* Chamber, from whence I did not intend to stir, till I could be certain Mr. *Incog.* had left mine, when somebody

knocked at the Door. It proved to be a Woman of the Neighbourhood, who came to inform us the Door of my Apartment was open, and that I ran a Hazard of being robbed. The Devotee answered ironically, there is no Danger, it is well guarded. I was the more piqued at this Reply, because it was spoke before a Stranger, one I did not know, who might put odd Constructions upon it. I answer'd her sharply, and said, her joke was ill timed. My Resentment had given me Courage. I rose up, with a Design to drive away Mr. *Incog.* myself; in Case he remained in my Chamber; I determined to treat him in so rough a manner, they should see I had no very great Fondness for him; but he was gone. I double-locked the Door, promising myself to be more watchful for the future, so as never to risk again being under such a Dilemma, out of which I found so much Difficulty to be extricated.

This Neighbour, being (as most Women are) very curious, followed me into my Chamber. Whether it was because she disliked Sister *de Calvaire*, who was proud, and scorned to speak to any-body, or that she had taken a Liking to me; she said, looking behind her at the same Time, as if she was afraid of being over heard, that she commended me very much, for treating my Servant as she deserved. It is a very flat-
-tering

tering Thing to have one's Actions approved. I made a Friend of my Neighbour, which pleased her, and she assured me, upon taking her Leave, if I should ever have Occasion to make Use of her, or want a prudent Confident, I need only let her know it, she should be ready on all Occasions to expose herself to any Danger, to shew her Zeal, as well as Inclination to serve me.

Sister *de Calvaire*'s late Behaviour renewed my Aversion to her; but what follows made it insupportable. I had ordered her to buy me some Linnen for Shifts, and Lace for my Night and Dress Caps. How surprized was I when she brought the Account. She had bought Cloth for me, hardly good enough for a Farmer's Wife, and the Lace no better. I was so piqued at this Conduct, I threw away her Bargains with Disdain. Know, said I, in a Passion, turning my Back upon her, these ridiculous Proceedings will not do for me, and at a proper Time and Place, I'll make you repent it.

The Devotee, who thought she had where-withal sufficiently to humble me, very insolently said; I ought not to be so prodigal, the Linnen she had purchased was good enough for me; and with regard to my Menaces, she cared very little for them. I was enraged at this Answer, and some other Impertinences she added, besides a thousand Things during the Course of this Day, more

vexatious, the one than the other, which made me almost distracted.

After I had wept plentifully, I determined to go the next Morning and complain to my Director, and employ all the Credit I had with him to get rid of this Woman. My Revenge transported me so far, I was resolved, in case he refused me, to desire he would think it proper, I should go to my Mother. This was the Effect of my Resentment and Reflections.

I must be greatly piqued to contrive such a Project. I had an extreme Friendship for the Abbot, and in any other Case I could never have been capable of such a Resolution. But Hate sometimes transports one beyond all Consideration. Mine for Sister *de Calvaire* carried me to the last Extremity. I was a very good Christian, but could not resolve to pardon her.

I passed the Night without Sleep. When Day-light appeared, which I lay expecting with great Impatience. I rose, and went out immediately after I was dressed, not troubling my Head whether Sister *de Calvaire* approved of it or not. I got into a Coach, and came to the Abbot's House. My Design was, by talking to him first, to anticipate him, and by that Means, prevent what happened on the last Occasion.

I was introduced into his Study, according to Custom, without any Signs of Inquisitiveness,

Inquisitiveness, with Respect to my early Visit. The Abbot came to me, much surprized I should be with him so soon in the Morning, and asked me the Reason of it, in an uneasy angry Tone. I was so transported with a Desire of getting the better of the wicked Devotee, I did not regard it. I explained my Uneasiness with such Resolution, as greatly astonished my Director. He began to talk to me as if I was at Confession, and condemned my Resentment, exhorting me to sacrifice my repugnant Spirit to Heaven.—But I would not give him Time to go on. I told him the Design I had formed of going to my Mother, since he took so little Notice of my Entreaties, and at the same Time, gave him to understand, that nothing in this World should ever oblige me to live with that Woman, who seemed to delight in making my Life miserable, and loading me with Chagrin.

The Abbot, rightly imagined, my Passion had got the upper Hand, and that I would not hearken to him upon the Affair in Question. According to the Designs he had upon me, he judged, it would be his best Method to sooth, not contradict my Humour. Well, it is resolved Miss, said he, Sister *de Calvaire* shall be discharged this very Night, I give you my Word. If it was not for Affairs of the utmost Consequence, which now confines me at home, I

would this Instant give you that Satisfaction. As for going away to your Mother, I am not your Master, it is not my Business to contradict any Resolution of that Sort, and I should be much concerned, was I suspected capable of putting you under any Kind of Restraint; I have too great a Regard for you ever to let that be the Case. I thought I had explained myself to you before; possibly I forgot it; I intended to tell you, I should be exceeding sorry, ever to give you any Cause to complain.

My Director, for whom I still preserved my Friendship and Esteem, continued this Discourse with such a pensive sorrowful Air, I was alarmed. Can I be so unhappy, said I, looking timorously upon him, to make you dissatisfied with me? If any Expression dropt from me while I was complaining——No, my dear Child, interrupted the Father, taking me by the Hand, your Anger was just, and it was well done to address yourself to me, to remove the Cause. What I have most Reason to be concerned for, is, my giving you this Woman, and to find by the Design you had formed of removing yourself, that your Hate had got the better of that Friendship which I flattered myself I was blessed with.

Whilst the Abbot was continuing this Discourse, methought his Eyes seemed to say, What my dear Child, go so far from
a Director

a Director who loves you so tenderly? Is it possible to conceive such a Scheme, and not foresee the Execution of it would overwhelm him with a thousand Uneasinesses.

I was so struck with this Imagination, I took Pains to persuade my Director, it was Spite gave Birth to this Project, on which Head I discoursed so agreeably, he recovered his good Humour. He promised to see me that Evening as soon as possible, and in the mean Time, would recommend a Girl to me I should approve. I made my most grateful Acknowledgments, and assured him, his Presence always dissipated my Sorrows.

We were entertaining ourselves with these Things over again, when the Tinkling of a Bell made him rise. Whilst he was with his Penitents, his Servants were not permitted to enter the Room, and the Bell was to give Notice when any one wanted him.

He bid me stay a Moment, and so saying left me in the Room, and took the Key in his Pocket. When I was alone, I remembered the Letter, I found one Day by Accident, and I wished, I don't know for what Reason, that another would fall into my Hands. To this Desire succeeded a very strong Inclination to satisfy it. I got up designing to look into a Folio I saw on a Marble Desk, but the Sight of a Porte Folio stopt me; I opened it, and took out

a Letter not quite finished. I judged it to be the Abbot's, which I read with all the Eagerness of a Penitent, who interests herself in her Director's Affairs a little more than she ought.

LETTER.

“**Y**OU inchant me Madam! I conceive by your Letter your great Penetration, and the Delight there is in directing you. I find, there will soon be no further Occasion for my Lectures. Nevertheless, I hope Vanity will not blind your Eyes. I have one Lecture in Reserve, which shall assure you for ever that Mark of Perfection you aspire after. I am very glad all those Fears, which were founded on Prejudice, are dissipated, and that I shall have the Honour of that Victory. Agree with me, therefore, that nothing can be more charming than to think of Futurity without Fear, and to hearken to its Judgments without any Doubts or Inquietude. This, be assured, is doing a great deal to arrive at this Point. But you have, I say, still something to learn——Time is precious——You must know with Art”

I was extremely sorry this Letter was not finished, it affected me very much, though
I could

I could not comprehend the Sense of it entirely. However, I judged, it treated of some secret Good, which he would endeavour to teach how to taste with Art. I was as yet, too ignorant to carry my Ideas any farther, and not so simple, but to desire greatly to have this Mystery cleared up, and to know the Efficacy of those Judgments, that were to be hearkened to, but above all, if they were so charming as he seemed to suppose them.

I doubt not the Greatness of your Highness's Curiosity to see the Key of this Letter. Please to have a little Patience — I promise you not to quit my Director, without explaining every Thing relating to him. The History of this Letter will be a curious Anecdote. I love a little Scandal too well, to deny myself that Pleasure, especially when I can expose People who are in the same Predicament with my Hipocrite.

I intended searching the *Porte Folio*, again, with a strong Opinion I should find something more; but behold the Door opened. You are rid of Sister *de Calvaire*, said the Abbot, as he was re-entring the Room. I had a great Mind to interrupt him, wanting to know by what Accident he had so soon accomplished it; but, continued he, hear me a little, I will tell you an admirable Stroke of this Woman's. Would you think it? She came here just now, on Purpose to

inform me you spent Part of Yesterday with the Man I surprized talking to you on the other Side the Door, and having consented to a Rendezvous he proposed, was gone this Morning to give him the Meeting. This Calumny, justified by your being here, convinced me of the Blackness of her Character. I was therefore determined she should stay no longer, but sent her away, without suffering her to make the least Reply; very happy, in learning from my own Experience, how circumspect we ought to be, with regard to other Peoples Reports.

This Discourse of my Directors, I solemnly protest, gave me unspeakable Pleasure; and it would have been compleat, had I enjoyed the Sight of Sister *de Calvaire's* Mortification; though, upon second Thoughts, I blessed my Stars, I was not at this Interview. I could not have denied Mr. *Incognito's* Visit, which gave me so much Inquietude; and notwithstanding there were nothing Criminal in it, the Abbot's being ignorant of the Matter was some Satisfaction.

When I came Home, I met the Neighbour, who had professed so much Friendship for me the Night before. My Countenance was so gay, and full of Good-humour on this Occasion, she complemented me upon it. Nor could I conceal the Cause, of which she congratulated me, and offered her Service, which I accepted, till the arrival of
my

my new Servant. This Gentlewoman had something very agreeable in her Face, which pleased me, and I believe it is the Look of the Eye that generally determines and engages us. This we experience on many Occasions.

Women, when they are *Tete-a-tete*, have generally their own chit-chat——We had ours——I learnt, that this good Woman was married to a Painter, against her Inclination, who's Name was *Severin*. Her Temper, very amiable and chearful; but she said, the Vexation and Trouble she endured for a long Time, had very much altered her. This was all I knew of her the first Visit. Afterwards, I was better informed, and shall have Occasion to mention her more than once before I conclude.

Our following Conversation turned upon many indifferent Things, among others, it naturally fell upon the Man who had so embarrassed me; which I was not sorry for, because, though I had determined with myself, never to have any-thing more to say to him, I was desirous of knowing who he was, and to have an Idea of his Character; as we lived upon the same Stair-case, it was proper I should be informed, that I might take fresh Precautions, in Case he actually proved the dangerous Man I took him to be.

I could not help laughing at the Relation *Madam Severin* gave me of this foolish Man,

who was one of the Actors at the Opera; she said, he had so extravagant an Opinion of his own sweet Person, as to fancy every Woman that looked at him to be in Love with him. He spent his whole Income in Dress, the better to appear in all public Places; with a Notion that, sooner or later, he should find some rich Heiress so enamoured with him, as to make his Fortune. His Head was fill'd with Love Speeches out of Operas and Romances, which he never failed to display when he met with a Lady to his Taste. If she treated him with Contempt (which was often the Case) he pretended he would stab himself, and the same History assures us, it sometimes succeeded.

I found so much Sweetness in my Neighbour's Conversation, I engaged her to dine, and continue with me the greatest Part of the Day. At parting, she promised to visit me as often as conveniently she could; which rejoiced me much; for I apprehended many an idle Hour would hang heavy on my Hands, and this honest Woman was very capable of relieving me very agreeably.

A few Moments after she was gone, a young Woman came, recommended by the Abbot, who's Countenance pleased me. She was about twenty Years of Age, tall and well shap'd, tolerably handsom, and much genteeler than Sister *de Calvaire*. The soft pretty Manner of her little Compliment, in
which

which she promised to make it her principal Care to oblige me, and that she should think herself happy to have it in her Power, was very engaging. My Director wrote to me the same Evening, informing me, he was obliged to go into the Country for a Week, and would certainly visit me the Day he returned. This I thought a long Absence, and sincerely declare it distressed me greatly. He returned the eighth Day in the Evening. I was too well pleased with his many excellent Qualities, not to receive him with great Joy. The first Thing he enquired, was, if I liked the young Woman he had sent, assuring me if I did not, I was her Mistress, and might discard her directly, and get another to my own Mind. I answered, I was well satisfied with her. He congratulated me upon it, and declared all the Vows he made were for my Happiness and Good. Such polite and engaging Behaviour, augmented my Friendship for this complaisant Director, and I in return vowed to be ever mindful of his Goodness, and, to merit the Continuance of it, should be my daily Study.

These Compliments being ended, we passed into my Chamber. The first Thing he took Notice of, was, those horrible Bargains of Sister *de Calvaire*'s, which were carelessly thrown upon my Settee. After the Abbot had looked upon them, he shrugged up his Shoulders, and prayed me to send them to him,

him, intending, as he said, to give them away in Charity; adding, he would, to make me an Amends for the foolish Mistake of that dirty Servant, order a Person of Understanding to buy what I wanted, hoping by that Means I should be supplied with what I had Occasion for to my Satisfaction.

We discoursed a little about my House-keeping and Furniture; after which, he questioned me how I employed my Time. You are young, said the Abbot, and cannot possibly be always at Work, it is necessary to have some Hours for Recreation, and that is what I have been thinking of. My Intention is, not to make your Solitude tiresome. Reading will be a fine Amusement, and dissipate the tedious Hours. If you can bring yourself to fancy it, you will find there is no Pleasure more agreeable, or more solid and instructive. A Book is a delightful Recreation, which may be taken up or laid down, as we are in the Humour; it opens a Door for Reflection, and instructs us how to think. You will meet with Patterns of Virtue for your Imitation, and learn how to avoid those Mistakes, which Vice plunges others into; and by the lively Description of such Examples naturally conceive an Abhorrence and Detestation of them, and know of what Consequence it will be to fly them for your own Preservation.

Convinced

Convinced from Experience, the Relief there is in the Amusement I now recommend to my dear Child, continued my Director, taking a Book out of his Pocket, I believed I should give you a real Pleasure, by chusing such Sort of Reading as would suit your Genius, and by interesting you, engage your Attention. This is the Life of a Man, who had a very tender Heart, and notwithstanding his Foibles, merited, even in his own Time (and that's saying a great deal) the highest Encomiums. It will inform you, that the holy Friendships between Persons of different Sexes are permitted, and the Delights which two Hearts strictly united enjoy. I doubt not you will find some Parts of it difficult to understand; take especial Care to remark such, because I shall have great Pleasure in explaining whatever you want to know. I had a Design in my Head, while the Abbot was talking to me, but afraid to put it in Execution. The last Letter I stole a Reading of at his House ran in my Mind. I would gladly have asked him some Questions about that Article, which affected me so much, without giving him any Suspicion for my Inquisitiveness. This was a very difficult Point, but what won't a very strong Desire bring about?

What he had been telling of me, with regard to those Delights which *Abelard* and
Eloiza

Eliza felt, was a Handle for me to oblige him, if possible, to explain what kind of Delights those were.

They say Nature discourses at a certain Age. That was not my Case. — So great a Novice was I, as to imagine there could be no other Sort of Impulse, but what I felt myself.

However indifferently I expressed my Ideas, the Abbot understood me perfectly well. Had we been longer acquainted, my dear Child, said he, I would this Day explain those Mysteries you are so inquisitive about; nay, I would have gone still farther, and have had no Scruple to instruct you in that charming Art, which transports the Soul with Pleasure, and is felt much better than it can be described, but it is too soon. I must be certain (before I unfold this great Knowledge) that you are worthy the Risk I shall be obliged to expose myself to. Oh! can you think it possible for me to be ungrateful, replied I, overjoyed our Conversation turned upon this Article? How unfortunate am I, to be suspected of making a bad Use of your Goodness? No, my Dear *Agnes*, pursued my Director, taking me by the Hand, I believe you have an excellent Heart, but I cannot help distrusting your Discretion. However innocent my Thoughts are, a Man of my Character ought never to hazard the least Surmise, that he had any
suspi-

suspicious Views. You risk nothing with me, interrupted I, impatient of those Delays and Doubts he raised; young as I am, I know how to be silent when I ought. Have a Care what you promise, replied the Abbot, with a beguiling Look, I am going to give myself up to your Sollicitations; but, remember well, you oblige me to it. If after my Compliance, I should find myself deceived, you will not have a more dangerous Enemy in the World.

I renewed my Assurances of absolute Discretion; upon which the Abbot rose, and made the Door fast. I imagined, by this Precaution, what he had to say was very mysterious, and very interesting, since he took so much Caution to prevent any one's hearing but myself. The Letters came into my Mind. I did not doubt, therefore, but I was going to learn something relating to those Enigmas I could not comprehend. This Notion gave me great Joy and Satisfaction.

As soon as the Abbot had seated himself close to me, he took my Hand, and regarding me with a timorous embarrassed Look, such as I never saw before; in a Moment, methought his Face seemed all in a Flame, and he began to tremble. My Mouth was open, ready to ask him the Reason of so surprizing a Change, but he prevented my Question. You may guess at my Trouble, said

said he, looking stedfastly upon me, how dear you are to me, and the extreme Confidence I repose in you. Know, and be assured, we are forbid to impart any Share of our Light; and if we act to the contrary, risk a Punishment, sometimes more cruel than the Loss of Life. Judge then, *Agnes*, if I had not Reason to consider, and require your eternal Secresy. And it must be preserved inviolable, for a thousand Reasons. I am going to do for you, what I never did for any one, and perhaps never may for any other Person living.

The more my Director delayed coming to the Point I desired, the more my Impatience was augmented. The Traitor made this pretended Secret of such mighty Consequence, only to raise my Curiosity the higher. My Imagination went in vain before what he had to tell me. My Innocence was so great, it was impossible for me to have any Penetration into the Matter.

Was you not informed, when at Years of Discretion, said this artful Man at last, that Sentiments of Honour and Virtue were never to be discarded? Did they not also teach you, how necessary a sufficient Stock of Modesty was, to avoid the Men, not to listen to them, nor suffer, on any Occasion whatsoever, their Caresses and Douceurs? You will allow, without my urging it any farther, these were the first Principles you imbibed,

imbibed, as well as being under an indispensable Obligation never to depart from them; for to act otherways, would be a Means of losing the Esteem of all good People, and also that Honour and *Reputation* which has been so highly recommended.

Besides the Infamy in this Life, which always follows the Loss of Honour, Religion teaches us likewise, that there are prepared for such as transgress Heavens righteous Laws, eternal Punishments, and nothing but a Confession of the Fault committed, together with a sincere Repentance, can stop the Sentence pronounced against Offenders.

These Fundamentals laid down, continued my Director, making me raise my Head, I shall proceed to an Explanation of the several Points. What do you understand by Honour, by Virtue, by Modesty, and by all those Words which relate to that Being called Reason? It is necessary to know what they mean, to prevent your transgressing the Maxims. How will you avoid the Precipice, if you are ignorant of the Path which leads to it.

The Abbot paused awhile for my Answer: I hung down my Head, and began to consider. This Question puzzled me. I understood those great Words only by their Names. But let us see, continued my Director, has not your Imagination fixed an Idea to them yet?

yet? Endeavour to make me some Answer, and in order to explain yourself more clearly, you may, by sifting your Heart (if I may be allowed the Expression) be enabled by that Means, to express yourself more freely, however vague your Reflections may have been.

I vow to your Highness, my anxious Perplexity, far from diminishing by this Discourse, increased more and more. I blushed for Shame at my own Ignorance, and durst not confess it. Courage, continued my Director, let me have no false Vanity, and still less Diffimulation. I cannot enter into any Detail, till I have searched the Folds of your Heart. But to make the Matter easier to you, added he, answer me this. What did you think, one certain Day, when M. *de St. Preuil*, finding you alone in Bed, absolutely attempted to undoe your Waistcoat? How came you to make a Resistance? What Evil did you apprehend? Did you think the Liberty he would have taken hurtful to your Honour, and was it your Honour would not suffer him to proceed.

This Stratagem of the Abbot's succeeded, and helped to open my Eyes. I begin to see clearly, said I, the Trouble I felt on that unhappy Occasion you now recal to my Mind, made me sensible, whenever Honour was in Danger, that Perplexity I then found myself in, was a Warning of it. And you are
in

in the right, continued my Director. That unquiet Motion, with which People in such Circumstances are agitated, is a certain Prognostic, that the Senses are ready to rebel. Whenever the Emotion carries you to that Pitch, your Virtue doubtless nods. Let us define it in a Way we are better acquainted with. Virtue, Modesty, or Honour, no Matter which, these Words signify the same Thing. Virtue, I say, is the depriving a disorderly Appetite of a secret Pleasure, which the Warmth of a certain Sense occasioned. Every Time that Sense covets or desires the Pleasure which is natural, and you strongly reject it, you perform an Act of Modesty; and when you are arrived to such a Perfection, as the never hearkening to the Allurements of that Sense, whatever Happiness it may promise, you then acquire the Reputation of virtuous, and you acquire it justly.

We must now proceed, my dear Child, to know, continued my Director, if the Effect, which proves the Definition of this Modesty, is rightly understood. I must understand a great deal to know that, replied I ingenuously. I have not the least Idea of it. So much the worse, said the Abbot, interrupting, and casting an amorous Glance at me. That Ignorance, robs you of an essential Merit. How can you be rewarded for a good Action you had no Share in? In order

order to comprehend it better, and come to a true Knowledge of the Effect in Question, let us make a Comparifon. How do you know when you've an Inclination to Sleep? by a general Heavinefs all over you, is it not fo? by an involuntary Stretching and Yawning, when your Eyes close whether you will or no, with a certain Sweetnefs. Don't you judge from thefe Symptoms, Sleep is going to furprize you, and that Nature wants to be reposed.

I comprehended this Comparifon wonderfully well. But, cry'd I, when Virtue triumphs, with what Sort of Emotions are we agitated? I am going to explain that, replied the Abbot, with an Air as if he feemed a little nonpluft; by articulating his Words, Syllyble by Syllable, very flowly. Have you never felt, on cafting your Eyes on a very handsom Man, a fecret Pleafure, and at the fame Time a Sort of Uneafinefs, and ftrange Emotion? I do not mean by the Word Pleafure, that fimple Joy which arifes at the Sight of an Acquaintance one likes; but that inward Emotion, which relates more to the Body than the Soul, and makes the Heart bound to a certain *je ne fai quoi*, that prompts you to a Defire of being alone with that very handsom Man. You undoubtedly underftand me, added the Director, fixing his Eyes upon me. No indeed, replied I with Concern, I am ftill
unacquainted

unacquainted with this same Effect, there is so much Perplexity in explaining. I know no other Notions distinctly, than those of Sleep, to be hungry and thirsty, to have an Aversion, such as I had for Sister *de Calvair*; to have an Affection for you and my Mother. As to any other Movements, I know nothing of them; and if there are any such, which bring Pleasure, and those of my Age are susceptible of them, which I do not doubt, because you tell me there are; I find myself the most unhappy Creature in the World in being so ignorant, and think Nature has been very unkind in her Dispensations to me.

In uttering these last Words, I could hardly refrain from Tears; I was afflicted in good earnest; and the Abbot was obliged to console me. My great Simplicity at this Time, will to be sure amuse your Highness. A little Patience, if you please; I have not done, but am going to prepare more Diversion for you. My Director, who was always full of Contrivance in examining my secret Sentiments, judging from my Answers, I was perfectly innocent, determined therefore, to proceed in his Scheme, and take Advantage of my Simplicity. You must not fancy, said he, after he had recovered me from my Concern, that you are not made like other Women. No, my dear Child, added he, with a confident Air, I know several, whose

whose Notions are not one Jot clearer in this Point than yours. No finding Fault with Nature therefore. I don't doubt, after two or three Lessons I shall give you in Concert with them, the whole Mystery will be unfolded to your Satisfaction.

I exulted with Transport at this Discourse. I conceived, that the Eclaircissement I was promised, must certainly relate to the Mysteries in those two Letters about which I had so often reflected. In this Opinion, what hinders, says I, your beginning that salutary Lesson this Minute? With all my Heart, said the Abbot, hugging me in his Arms, you are too lovely to be refused any Thing.

How shall I be able, most amiable Princess, to relate this Scene, without breaking through those Rules which Decency always require of us? It is a very delicate Step, as you see. I fear, I shall find some Difficulty to get cleverly off, but I advertise you beforehand, if I once trip, I will proceed no farther. Think what you please of this hypocritical Abbot's Rashness, provided you do not lay half the Crime to my Charge, you may construe Things to your own Mind.

Very far from thinking this perfidious Director had any unreasonable Views, I was so rejoiced at his Promise, I received the Embrace he gave me, with all possible Friendship, and the Return, which perhaps he did not expect; helped to banish and overcome
any

any Remains of Fear or Modesty. He told me, casting his Eyes downwards, with a hypocritical Bashfulness, he was, in the first Place, under an indispenfible Obligation to lay his Hand upon my Heart. I suspected no Harm; this propofal therefore did not alarm me fo much as it ought to have done. However, I asked him how that would operate. Various Ways, cry'd he, advancing his Hand. The Beatings of the Heart, like the Vibrations of the Pulse, ferve to give us a Light into the moft fecret Motions. Befides, the Warmth of the Hand caufes an Emotion, which brings about the Execution of our Defign.

Thus preposseffed then, I confented he fhould lay his Hand upon my Heart, but there was one Difficulty I did not think of at firft, which made me hesitate a little; and that was, I muft either take off my Handkerchief, or fuffer him to put his Hand into my Bosom. This Thought made me confider. Any Girl that has been well brought up, let her Innocence be what it will, cannot avoid blushing on fuch an Occafion. I made no Secret of my Confufion to my Director; at which he fmiled. I am enchanted, faid he, thrufting his Hand under my Handkerchief, at your fhewing fo much Inquietude, it is a ftrong Symptom, and foretels your very foon comprehending thofe Notions I wifh you to have. Shall I give you a Proof,
H added

added he, taking my Hand and feeling my Pulse? Does this Feeling make any Impression! No, answered I, surprized at that Question. The Reason is this, continued he, because the Effects which we want to know, have no Relation to your Hand; they exist only in the Heart, and that is the Reason, the meer Idea of touching your's has moved you, and occasions that Trouble you attributed to your Education.

This Reasoning seemed to me too clear to require an Answer, I therefore held my Tongue, expecting the Effects of all this Pains my Director was taking, to make me enjoy those Notions I was unhappily deprived of. I made no Resistance while his Hand was upon my Heart, but when he had insensibly moved it, and I felt him pressing my Breasts, I rose briskly up, with a Fire which had mounted into my Face. Very well, very well, cry'd the Abbot, following me, my Lesson begins to operate; at our next, I doubt not our Desires will be compleat. Don't you find it true now? Did not you begin to feel something more than a Desire to sleep? Oh! Yes, I assure you, replied I, reddening more and more; but I believe, I shall never attempt such a Remedy for my Ignorance again. So much the worse, replied the Priest coldly. Little did I expect such Thanks for exposing myself as I have done. I had certain good Reasons not to
give

give Way to your Sollicitations, and should have waited longer. I might have foreseen, that such a young Thing as you, could not possibly have Discernment enough to know the Value of what I was willing to do for you. But let it suffice for the present, added the Abbot, taking up his Hat, and so I shall bid you farewell. After having had some little Time for Reflection, you may perhaps comprehend, that your being so very dear to me, occasioned my exposing myself to what has happened.

After the Director had spoke these Words, in a serious reserved Manner, he made me a Bow very coolly, and was going. O Goodness, how cruel you are! said I, running to stop him; I did not intend to disoblige you; is it possible, with your Penetration, not to know my Heart better. I see nothing but Prejudice and Infatuation, replied he, with an Air more calm, though he seem'd to be vexed; you are a revolting Penitent, that dares rebel against a wise Guide, who's Intentions are as pure as they are beneficial, and I ought never to see you more after this. The Lord preserve me, said I, interrupting him, with Tears in my Eyes: If I should be so unfortunate to be abandoned by you, what must become of me! alas! I shall fall into Despair. Pray sit down Sir, added I, taking him by the Hand, I shall never be easy till I am assured

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you will forgive my Imprudence; I shall be more docible hereafter, and give you no Cause to be angry with me; I shall ever think you do nothing, but with the most solid Reason, and with which it will be proper I should always comply.

End of the second Part.

PART

P A R T III.

I Don't know, my Princess, what Consequences these Proceedings, joined to my foolish Confidence, would have produced, had not Heaven taken Compassion upon my Simplicity, and order'd it so, somebody knocked at the Door the Moment my Director was going to pursue his Lesson. The Trouble, with which the Abbot withdrew his Hand, augmented that I endeavoured to surmount. I did not perceive he had bolted my Chamber-Door; in going to unbolt it, he took up a Book of Devotions, he found lying upon a Commode, and placed himself down by me, saying, we must always prevent Peoples thinking, if possible, and do nothing that may give them Room to talk. These Words were hardly out of his Mouth, when the Door of my Closet opened. *Maryann* (which was the Name of my new Servant) came to inform me, a tall Footman was sent by his Master, then at the Door, to know if I was at home; and from the Answer she returned, I might expect he would be with me instantly.

I could, by the Look my Director gave me, read his Discontent and Surprize. He

asked me, with some Concern, if I knew who this unforeseen Visitor was, or if I had given Encouragement to any one. My Astonishment was so apparent, as not to cause any Suspicion of Artifice in my Answer, which was far from making the Abbot easy, he seemed more and more disturbed. His first Apprehension was, that *M. de St. Preuil* had discovered my Retreat, or that I had met some one of his Servants in the Streets, who had dogged me Home, and informed his Master. This Suspicion occasioned a very strict Charge not to mention the Abbot's Name, but to declare the Risque my Virtue was in occasioned my Flight; and after a very strong Injunction not to go with *M. de St. Preuil*, let him be ever so pressing; and assuring me, as soon as he was gone, I should be conducted to a Place, where there could be no Apprehension of any such Event as this happening hereafter, he went and hid himself in my Wardrobe.

It is easy to imagine how this Conjecture of the Abbot's alarmed me. I knew *M. de St. Preuil* but too well, and in case it should prove a Visit from him, as it seemed to have the Appearance, I could not flatter myself with any Hopes of getting from him. He was a Man, that would not allow of any Excuse; I resolved therefore, to prevent all Hazards, to make my Escape through the Back-Door of my Closet, but had not Time. *Maryann*,
returned

returned a second Time, followed by a tall Gentleman very magnificently dress'd, whom I did not at first recollect. After a little Pause, coming up to me very genteely, he said, I have found you Miss, and if you knew the Pains I have taken, the Stratagems I have used, you would not take it amiss of me. I thought, for a long Time, *M. de St. Preuil* had withdrawn you from my Sight, and that the Uproar he made about your Flight, was a Contrivance, concerted between him and you, to prevent my coming to the Knowledge of your Adventure; but, thank Heaven, I now know who I am beholden to. I am not ignorant of the happy Mortal's Name, who has deprived us of your charming Presence. My Emissaries have done their Duty, as you see. I can easily guess the hypocrite's Project, in recommending this Retreat. As soon as I got the Information, I flew hither to reason with you a little about it, happy, if I am not come too late! Know then, your Director is a Wretch, and that you ought to drive him from you as a Monster that deserves the severest Chastisement. I perceive, by your Looks, how astonished you are at what I am saying; but, since I am now entered into a Detail on this Subject, I question not, before I have done, you will tremble to think of having put such Confidence in this Villain, and the Obligation that is due to me, for snatching you

from those shocking Misfortunes which were impending over your Head.

Let any one judge of my Surprise and Confusion at such an Introduction. I knew not what to answer, and still less how to behave to a Man I found so determined. During this Discourse I durst not lift up my Eyes; but, upon his moving towards me, I could not help looking at him. I then knew him to be the Marquis *de Sberling*, whom I have twice mentioned in these Memoirs. This brought two Things to my Mind. I did not doubt his coming from M. *de St. Preuil*, and that it was impossible for me to avoid falling into his Hands. To this Chagrin was added the Mortification of hearing my poor Director abused, who was not above four Paces from us, and must certainly hear this fine Apology. However, I could not at present, make any Reflection on what was said to his Disadvantage; I was too much disturbed in my own Mind; in short, I was quite stupid, my Eyes cast down, entirely Motionless, unable to determine how to act.

The Marquis knew the World too well, not to give a Guess at Part of those Ideas at least, which were now rising in my Mind. Assure yourself, Miss, said he, as he was conducting me to an Elbow chair, and seating himself by me, I am not come here, nor have I taken so much Pains in this Discovery,
with

with an Intent to disoblige you, or to disturb your Quiet. I shall in four Words relate my Views and Designs.—From the first Moment I had the Honour to see you, I have retained the most tender and respectful Regards for you, and have ever since endeavoured for an Opportunity to assure and convince you of it, which I thought I was so fortunate to meet with one Morning; you may remember, when the Person, whom I always imagined to be the Author of your Birth, was so confounded at my Coming; but you know how distrustful he was of me, and what a Dupe I was to a Supposition, which the Circumstances of that *Tete-a-tete* made very improbable. It is but within these two Days I am better informed. All the Circumstances of this Knowledge would be too tedious to relate; however, it will make me very happy, if I may flatter myself with the Hopes of communicating my Sentiments, and that you will hearken to them.

That you may have no Reason to question my being informed, from good Hands, what most nearly concerns you, let it suffice, that he who is supposed to have given you Day-light, has made me the Confident of all your secret History, assuring me at the same Time, he never should have revealed it, had not this Elopement proved your Dislike of him, and he imagined you was engaged in some

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other Intrigue you very carefully concealed
from him.

And in the next Place, it is necessary I should inform you, how I came to discover the Place of your Retirement. In spite of all my Efforts, it would have been exceeding difficult for me to have succeeded, if a most extraordinary Affair had not accidentally happened whilst I was at a certain President's, by which Means I came to the Happiness I little expected.

The Day before Yesterday, the President *de* invited me to dine with him, I accepted the Party. His Lady, as soon as Dinner was over, made an Apology, and excused herself for the Obligation she was under to leave us, protesting, she had an Affair which would not permit her, on any Account whatsoever, to stay with us longer. Her Husband, one of the best Men in the World, who never laid her under any Restraint in his Life, now exerted his Authority, being highly provoked at the Unpoliteness of her Behaviour; saying, she might defer her Business to another Day; that he was not so often at home, to make her weary of his Company. Madam *Presidente*, who had never been accustomed to Contradiction, made some ironical Answer, and was getting up to go. The Husband, piqued at the little Regard his Wife paid him before a third Person, as well as the jesting Manner of
of

of her Answer, took her very roughly by the Arm, and forced her into her Chair again; and said, for this Time, Madam, you will be so good not to deprive us of your Company. This unusual Treatment, exasperated her; one Word drew on another, till they were both enraged. I interposed, and endeavoured to make Peace, but all in vain. How shall I tell you? A blow (which I could not parry) came like Lightning from the Husband. The piercing Cries of the Wife alarmed all the Servants, I had hardly Time to prevent their rushing into the Room; and it was highly necessary to hide so shocking a Scene from public Censure. The President is my Friend, and I should have been exceeding sorry, to see him made a Subject of Ridicule; neither do I imagine the malicious World would have spared me on this unhappy Occasion. I to be sure, though an innocent Spectator only, must have had a Share of the Event.

Madam *President*, notwithstanding, continued to exclaim, threatening to complain, and sue for a Separation. I don't know, whether the Husband disregarded it, or whether my being there encouraged him; I could not form any Judgment of the Matter; however, far from endeavouring to appease his Wife, he seemed to persevere in giving her fresh Reasons to persist in her Separation, which she continued so loudly to threaten

him with; and if I had not seized him round the Middle, I don't know to what Excess his Rage might not have carried him. It was towards Evening before I could make them hearken to Reason. I observed, the *President* had some secret Cause for his Bitterness; and in order to bring about an Accommodation, it would be necessary to have an Explanation. We are often mistaken in our Prejudices; a false Report, an idle Jest, or doubtful Words, will produce Quarrels and Disputes; a meer Trifle, sometimes, occasions Discord in the best-regulated Families. What made me suspect this might be the Case here, was, because Madam *de* . . . never gave herself any coquettish Airs, and, far from occasioning any Suspicion for Jealousy, every Body, on the contrary, looked upon her as a Pattern for the Woman of her Neighbourhood. She was also esteemed a devout Person; I was at a Loss therefore, to guess what could possibly provoke her Husband to such Resentment.

I soon after discovered, by a Reproach of the *President's*, that his Resentment was not without Foundation. He enquired about a Letter, wrote to a certain Director, in which there were some Expressions unbecoming a Penitent. That Reproach, made Madam *de* . . . change Colour, and struck her quite dumb. But, presently recovering herself, as if she only reddened because she
was

was vext, absolutely denied ever writing any Letter of that Kind. The Husband, who was sure of his Fact, darted like Lightning into his Closet, and in an instant returned triumphing, with a Letter in his Hand. Madam *Présidenté*, having cast her Eyes upon her Epistle, discovered by her Astonishment and Confusion, which encreased more and more, that her Husband had not accused her falsely. The reading of this Letter let me into the Secret. You cannot imagine how your Director was treated. The *Président*, never conducted a Cause so well in his Life; in a Minute, he was Counsel, Judge, and Jury. The Abbot was arraigned, and convicted of Hypocrisy and Deceit. I don't believe, if he had been present, he would have dared to appeal.

The Indictment of the *Présidenté*, which, according to the Sentence of the Court, it was expected would have made an eternal Rupture, had an admirable Effect, which the *Président* and myself never expected. Madam *de . . .* after ruminating a Moment, threw herself into her Husband's Arms, telling him, she thanked Heaven for what he had done, that it had opened her Eyes! The Comment he made upon each Sentence of the Letter, wrought this Miracle. In short, Miss, not to be too circumstantial in satisfying your Curiosity, Madam *Présidenté* was so obliging, as to relate all her Transactions

actions with the Director, from one End to the other. She told us, the artful Method he took to banish all her Scruples; but as the whole Detail would be too tedious to relate, I shall only inform you, after he had taken Pains to make her comprehend, that the rigid Laws of Religion were susceptible of Toleration, and that the Threats with which they terrified timorous Mortals, were only invented, to make them Slaves to a Principle he had discarded. He went on, insensibly, to a Notion, of procuring to herself all the Pleasures she could enjoy in this Life, giving his beloved Penitents to understand, it was true Philosophy to make a voluptuous Use of them, and to be above all the chimerical Maxims of Prejudice and vile Subordination.

The *President*, touched with the Goodness of his Wife's Behaviour, in giving him this frank Relation, after what had so lately passed, asked a thousand Pardons for his rash and violent Conduct. She loved, and therefore could easily forgive him; Peace was directly concluded, on one Condition. Madam *de* desired to know how the Letter came to fall into her Husband's Hands. The *President* had so much Complaisance to tell her a Devotee, called Sister *de Calvaire*, gave it him. This Woman, who without Doubt was disgusted with the Abbot, being one Day at his House, when a Servant of
Madam

Madam *de* came with this Letter from her. Whether it was natural Curiosity, or Jealousy of a Preference to her Prejudice, Sister *de Calvaire* opened the Epistle, and durst not deliver it unsealed; she concealed it therefore, and coming to an open Rupture with the Abbot afterwards, brought it the *President*, out of Revenge to the Priest, to make him Repent his Ill-treatment of her, notwithstanding the different Uses he formerly put her to, which out of Charity ought not to be divulged.

The *President's* History of this Woman, created in Madam *de* a Curiosity to see her, and engage her if possible to disclose the Secret she so religiously preserved. The *President*, having recovered his Good-Humour upon the Reconciliation, told us, it was a very easy Matter, for he knew where Sister *de Calvaire* lived, and would send for her. A Footman was called directly, when we affected to laugh and clamour in the same Manner, as had disturbed the House before, to prevent the Servants making any Sort of Reflections on what had passed. We all three acted our Parts so well, the Adventure was never talked of.

I need not repeat to you, Miss, continued the Marquis, all Sister *de Calvaire* informed us about your Director; she was indeed a little cautious at first, but being once entered, she told us a hundred Tricks of this Man's,
more

more particular and more interesting than you can imagine. Among the many she recounted, one of the last struck me; it resembled your Adventure so much, as it related to a Daughter who was run away from her Father, I could not help making the Application; I said nothing, but as soon as Sister *de Calvaire* was gone, I made a Pretence of Business, and directly took my Leave of the *President* and his Lady, and soon overtook the Devotee, with whom I scraped Acquaintance, and found it no difficult Matter to put her upon your Adventure; she told me all she knew, and gave me such a Description, as did not resemble you enough to make it certain. But to be a Devotee, and to be a bad Woman is so near akin, her Report made no Impression upon me.

Nevertheless, I must own, what she said, with regard to your great Complaisance for your Director, made me uneasy after the Portrait she had given me, and the Character I have since heard he has in the World. However, that I might depend upon the Truth of this Report, I desired to know, by what Means she came acquainted with these Facts, so circumstantially described. She told me, having been the Abbot's Messenger for a long Time, she had frequent Opportunities of discovering many Things which related to him, through the Confidence often reposed

reposed in her; some of his Penitents being now and then dissatisfied with him, while others suffered themselves to be his Dupes. A small Present I made the Devotee, engaged her in my Interest. She shewed me the House of that Person whose Adventure resembled your's; but when I came there, I could not find what I sought for, and so ardently coveted to discover; and I now despaired, as much as I flattered myself before with the Hopes of seeing you. Judge, Miss, how chagrin'd I was at this Disappointment.

Sister *de Calvaire*, whom I took along with me in my Chariot, testified her Concern at my great Uneasiness, which I could not conceal; and, in order to comfort me, promised to use her utmost Endeavours, to find what I had so long been searching for in vain; and she was as good as her Word.

She came this Morning, and enquired for me, when I little expected her. Think how transported I was, when I heard her say, as she entered my Room, I have certainly found what you have been seeking for with so much Inquietude. I hugged her about the Neck, and made her sensible of my Acknowledgment. I desired her to come along with me hither, but she made a very plausible Excuse, advising me not to think of it until the Evening, because I should not, in all Probability, meet with you alone. And
now,

now, I have only to declare, my exceeding great Joy at finding you again, after so much Uneasiness; and to hope, from your own Mouth, that the Motives of my Impatience do not offend you.

The Marquis's unexpected Visit threw me into the utmost Consternation, and his Discourse, no one can think would tranquilize me. And indeed, how many shocking Circumstances did it not recal to my Mind at once? My Situation was so painful, I know no Words to express it. In the mean Time, the Marquis was pressing hard for an Answer. But I durst not; the Fear of being overheard by my Director, who undoubtedly listened with no small Attention, made me undetermined and trembling.

This Embarrassment the Marquis interpreted to my Disadvantage. He told me, he apprehended but too well the Cause of my Silence and Disorder; and that he had great Reason to fear, the vile Seducer had triumphed over what was most dear to me. At this cruel Reproach, I rose, and let fall a Flood of Tears, crying out, in the Transport of my Grief, that I had done nothing could make me deserve to be reviled with such injurious Suspicions. That I was very miserable, to be thought capable of being wanting in my Virtue; besides which, how horrible, to have so holy a Man as my Director involved in the same Calumny! and without

without Doubt, Heaven would, sooner or later, punish those slanderous Tongues, who dare invent such scandalous Reports, and blacken a Reputation, that was Proof against Envy, and all the Shafts of the Wicked.

Truth, has the Property of being always persuasive and affecting. Make yourself easy, beautiful *Agnes*, said he, taking me by the Hand, and forcing me to sit down again. I am convinced, and it is with Joy, I still have the same Opinion I always had of your Virtue; pardon my unjust Suspicions. I am satisfied you are what you ought to be, but I nevertheless must persevere in my Opinion, with respect to that Hypocrite who secrets you here. Forgive me, if, upon this Article, my Sentiments differ from your's. In the Affairs of the World, I have more Experience, though you have more Innocence. It may be true, that your Virtue has been in no Danger with this dishonest Man, but one Time or other it certainly will be known what Hands you have been in. And it cannot be expected, Miss, that strict Justice will be done to your Merit. You ought not, in Prudence, to hesitate about what I propose——Follow me——I will be your Conductor into a Place of Safety, free from evil and seducing Conversation. Be under no Apprehension about M. de St. Preuil, who ought to be avoided, as well as feared, and still less of that hypocritical
Director,

Director, to whom, in the long-run, you must have fallen a Victim. I will take Care ~~that~~ neither of them shall ever find you, in a Place you may depend upon being treated with the Respect you deserve.

My Mouth was open, ready to exclaim against this extravagant Proposition, especially, after the Declaration of Love, which preceded it; and my Design was, to assure him positively I would not depart from my Asylum, till I went into the Convent. But the Abbot prevented me; he was certainly afraid I should leave him; and I doubt not, thought the Marquis would prevail upon me to accept of his Proposals; and therefore darted into the Room at once, to undertake his own Cause. No, you shall not inveigle Miss away, cry'd he, advancing proudly towards us! if she should even be so imprudent to suffer herself to be prejudiced, by your scandalous and indecent Discourse, I can, however, prevent her going from this Place till I think proper. Though a Stranger to me, know Sir, whoever you are! the wicked Falsities you have so maliciously aspersed me with, are vile Forgeries, and of which I shall complain, as meriting the severest Chastisement. It is not such evil Discourse, propagated through Envy, and abetted by Libertines, Atheists, or a vile Rabble, that can blemish a Reputation so well established as mine. I am well known,
both

both at Court and in the City. I may, without Vanity, venture to say, my Probity and Wisdom have raised me many Friends and Protectors. Evil be to those who shall dare to calumniate me! Mine is the Cause of the Church, of Religion, and of all honest Men. I expect you will be convinced of what I say, and will therefore think it convenient, if you please, to take your Leave. I have the Care of Miss, she receives Advice from none but me; she is here waiting for an Opportunity to go into the Convent, where I am ready to place her. Charity makes it necessary for me to acquaint you with these Things, and my Religion obliges me to pardon your Outrages. I leave to Heaven, the terrible Avenger of Offences, to punish the Disorders and Scandal you have occasioned here, with as much Levity as Imprudence. In a Word, I shall not suffer you to take away a Lamb consecrated to Heaven. She is under the Protection of the Government and the Monastery; and if you dare have Recourse to Violence to force her from me; I here declare, I will employ all proper Means to make you repent so rash an Attempt.

After so sharp a Reprimand, which I believed very likely to silence the Marquis *de Sberling*, I thought he would have asked Pardon, or at least retired without a Reply. But how great was my Surprize, when he had

had heard the Abbot out very quietly, and with admirable Patience! he came up to the very Nose of him; and said, it is very happy for you I have a Respect for your Cloth, as well as for this Lady; it is for these Reasons I forbear, or I would teach you to prate. Reserve your Advice, and your pitiful prodigal Airs, for People less acquainted with all your Rascalities than I am. I know you, that's enough—you understand me. However, to give a Reply to your Threats. I declare, if you persist in giving yourself these Airs, I will immediately send for a Commissary, into whose Hands I shall commit you, and the same Instant I will go and give an Account of your edifying Conduct, and our Adventure, to those you ought to revere, who shall decide our Quarrel, and treat you with that Justice you deserve.

This Lecture, was delivered in so resolute a Manner, it quite confounded my poor Director, he attempted in vain to speak, his Voice faltered and died away in his Throat. I vow to your Highness, he looked so confuted, I condemned him in my Heart, and it diminished the high Opinion I had of his Credit, and that profound Veneration I imagined all the World had for him. I was greatly troubled how this Scene would end. I foresaw very well, which ever Way it turned, I should be equally embarrassed
 but how

how to behave. I knew not which Side to incline to. The Marquis was very amiable, and I had no Reason to question his polite and obliging Carriage; but then, he made me a Declaration of his Love, and that was, I thought, a sufficient Cause to fly from him.

My Director had given me such a frightful Idea of the Men, especially where they find a Lass to their Liking, that I trembled, only to think of meeting with the Marquis; and this Reflection put me into a very great Agitation. On the other hand, supposing the Abbot should, by his Eloquence, or by his Address, take me out of the Marquis's Hands, I should not be one Jot easier; the Blow was given. Those Reproaches he defended so weakly, greatly prejudiced me, in-so-much, my former high Opinion of him was very much lessened by it. Without having Time to dive into a thousand Things, I began to entertain strange Suspicions in my Mind, and the Abbot's Behaviour, far from dissipating them, they increased every Moment.

The Conclusion of a Scene so perplexing, threw me into the utmost Consternation. After my Director had kept Silence for some Time, he at last broke forth, and addressing his Discourse to me, he said, you are a Witness, Miss, how unjust these Strokes are, with which my Character has been thus blackened.

blackned. I believe, you have never seen any-thing in my Conduct to be suspected, nor any Behaviour of mine the least resembling what has now been said of me. Was it not for that Humility I have so often preached to you, and which it is my Duty to practise, I could very easily clear myself, and justify both my Actions and 'good Intentions. But I am suspected, and that is too much. It is my Business therefore to withdraw, and pray the Powers above to protect my Innocence, and not let it suffer by my Retreat. Our Maxims also forbid me ever seeing you again. That an Air of Scandal has been given to the few Visits I have made here, is a sufficient Reason I should suppress them for ever. As to the harsh Treatment I have met with from the Marquis, added the Abbot, turning towards him, as I am a good Christian, I forgive it, and I beseech him, not out of any Regard to myself, but for the avoiding of Scandal, to say nothing of this Adventure. And it is my determined Resolution, to restrain my Zeal for the future, and never more endanger my Reputation, by being in the like Situation.

In finishing these Words, the Abbot departed, with so affecting an Air, I could not help being moved, and shedding Tears. That eternal Farewel he took, and the Concern his Absence occasioned, were accompanied

panied with a sincere Sorrow. What, Miss! weep for that Man, cry'd the Marquis, looking at me with Surprise! Is it possible, with your Understanding, not to comprehend how culpable your Director was, and the Risque your Virtue had ran? I am very positive, before it is long, you will think proper to pay your Acknowledgments to Heaven for your Deliverance. Only consider, the Hypocrite durst not look me in the Face, and how the terrible Apprehensions he was under, that I should ruin him with the World, humbled him, and made him begin to supplicate. If there can be any Doubt about what I advance, with Regard to the Behaviour of this wicked Man, you shall, if you please, have convincing Proofs of it. I have Sister *de Calvaire* at my Devotion, she knows him thoroughly. Shall I send for her? You may be satisfied from her Mouth of the Facts she has recounted to me; and in Truth, they will make your Abhorrence of this Deceiver, as great, as your Opinion was before good, with respect to his Behaviour and Piety.

This Information, was far from confirming the Stories I had been told of my unfortunate Director, it rather induced me to recal my Prejudice. I knew Sister *de Calvaire* very well. He quoted her, and I doubted every Thing she said. I told him, if Sister *de Calvaire* was his Author, it was

sufficient to prevent my giving Credit to the Accusations against my Director. And, as a Foundation for this Reply, I drew the Picture of Sister *de Calvaire*, in which I did not forget to relate all the vile Tricks she had played me, and expressed myself with such Spirit on this Head, I believe, he would think it a very difficult Matter to remove the Prejudice I had to her, and that I should not readily lend an Ear to any of those Stories she had related to the Abbot's Disadvantage.

The Marquis never once interrupted me, while I was explaining myself on this Article, but regarded me with an Air, as if he pitied my Blindness. After I had done speaking, he asked me with great Politeness, as well as Tenderness, if I would be so good to answer him a few Questions he had to ask me, on my Director's Account; assuring me, they should decide his Demerits, and that he would render him all the Justice that was due to him. I found the Proposal very reasonable, and thought I should have such an Advantage in justifying my Director, I readily consented.

Don't think Miss, said the Marquis, after recollecting himself for a Moment, that I have any other Intention by opposing my Sentiments to your Ideas, but purely for the Sake of your Honour and Repose. When I shall have the Happiness to be better known

to

to you, I have the Vanity to think, you will be convinced of it. As for myself, I have no Occasion to find the Abbot guilty, 'tis entirely for your Service, that I intend to unmask him; it is for your Interest, which is much dearer to me than my own. Neither would I have it imagined, in whatever I shall advance, I have the least Intention of blaming your Conduct. All I find reprehensible, will fall only upon the Abbot. You have done nothing, but by the Advice of this Man, thinking it your Duty to hearken to him, so that he alone will be condemned.

After this Preface, which tickled my little Vanity, the Marquis gave me to understand, my Flight had occasioned a great deal of Discourse, as the Imprudence of delivering myself up unwarily to a Man, with whom I ought to have no other Connection, but that which Religion authorises. Can it be imagined, added he, if his Views had been as pure as he would have them thought, he would have secreted you in an obscure Apartment, without the Knowledge of any one of your Relations, and in such a Manner, as if you had been a Person reserved for such Purposes, as Decency condemns, and Modesty dares hardly suspect. After these Considerations, he examined into the little Regard I had shewn for my Mother, in taking such a rash Step without informing

her, and in not consulting her about so important a Scheme. Have you ever wrote to her since leaving her Husband? Does she know what is become of you? Was the letting her know ever mentioned? Have such Duties as these been omitted? A Director, far from being the Means of your omitting them, is he not ordained to teach them, and make you observe them? What did he intend by bringing you into a Place where nobody knew you? And in Case you had been obliged, in those delicate Circumstances, to have removed for the Preservation of that Honour, for which you would sacrifice every Thing, who could you address yourself to, when no one Friend was informed of your Situation, all the World, even your Mother, was ignorant of the Place of your Asylum? How came the Abbot not to think of placing you in a Convent, instead of abandoning you to the World, and the Caprice of Accidents? Was not such Conduct suspicious? Ought he not to be suspected? What were his Views? How came it to pass you did not discover them?

After discoursing a little upon these Questions *en passant*, the Marquis asked me, with the same Politeness and Respect, upon what Subjects our Conversation generally turned, when I was alone with my Director. This, said he, will decide the Affair. The little Experience you have of the World, makes

makes it impossible for you to know Mankind ; but if you did, it would be no easy Matter to unfold the Ideas of so subtle a Person as your Director. How many young People, like you, are ruined for want of knowing their Danger, and what they are exposed to ! What bad Consequences does not such imprudent Conduct produce ? They see not the Precipice till they are fallen into it. Then all Hopes are vain, the Mischief is done, and not to be repaired——Probity is striking and persuasive——I put a Confidence in the Marquis at once, and therefore, without giving myself the Trouble to recollect all that had passed between the Abbot and me, from our first Acquaintance, I thought it would be sufficient to repeat Word for Word our last Conversation only. I did it sincerely, without omitting one Circumstance in so interesting a Visit. The Dissertation upon the secret Movements of the Heart, and the Method of proving its Effects, were related in the plainest Manner, and with the strictest Truth. I will not answer for myself, amiable Princess, if there was not some little Vanity, in being so very exact in this Respect, I might possibly imagine, it would give him a good Opinion of my Sincerity. However it was, I did it with the same Innocence I retained through my whole Conduct ; and believing I should not prejudice either myself or my Director,

I disclosed every Thing very unconcernedly, and without the least Impediment.

In my bringing up, I was instructed to cast my Eyes downward, when I was in Company with Men, which prevented my viewing the great Astonishment the Marquis was in at my Discourse. After I had done speaking, happening by Chance to look up, I perceived very plainly he appeared to be buried in a profound Revery. He seemed afraid to look upon me, like a Person seized with a very sudden Surprise. He sighed from Time to Time, as if in great Pain, without daring to complain. I knew not what to think of so extraordinary a Case, never imagining I was the Cause of it. But I soon found my Mistake, and that I had given more Occasion than I imagined.

At length, recovering himself, and casting his Eyes upon me, with an Air of Pity, as I thought. Can it possibly be, Miss, cry'd he, joining both his Hands, and looking earnestly upon me, after what you have been telling me, that you cannot guess what I have to say? O Heavens! to what a Degree have you carried your Innocence? Pardon my Freedom. What! still to think this unworthy Director an honest Man. Do you know, it is your Duty to return Thanks to Heaven every Day of your Life, for not permitting him to consummate his criminal Schemes? You have been upon the Brinks
of

of Destruction; in a few Minutes more, you had been lost for ever. The Danger was the more certain, because your own Innocence concealed its Approaches from you. Good Heaven! that you did not crush with your Thunder, such an egregious Rascal? No! I don't believe the most abandoned Libertine could have made Use of such dangerous Artifices to seduce a youthful Heart. Yes! I repeat it again, the Abbot is a most detestable Villain, whose Crime deserves to be punished with the severest Chastisement. This surprizes you, I read your Amazement in your Looks; but be assured, I advance nothing but what is exactly true, though I can't make you comprehend it perfectly.

The less I expected such a Remonstrance, the more it affected me. But Sir, replied I, with some Emotion, what is there so very extraordinary, in the Relation I have made, that you draw such terrible Consequences from it? Oh thou beautiful Virgin, interrupted the Marquis, how easily shall I make you understand it! I should have been more explicit, had I not a greater Respect for you than your guilty Director. I will venture but one Word, and that shall be sufficient to make you comprehend me. Whatever your Ignorance may be with regard to Dissoluteness, pray would you have suffered, on any Pretence whatsoever, a Man to put his

Hand into your Bosom, if any other besides the Abbot had taken that Liberty; and if you had confessed it to him, don't you think he would have made you sensible of the Indecency of it? But, hear me a Word or two more. If you suspect that I exaggerate, or believe that I am carried away by Passion and Resentment, tell your Tale to somebody else, it is a very easy Matter. Though there are wretches amongst the Ministers of Religion, impious Men, who abuse every Thing that's sacred to satisfy their Lust, be assured, there are nevertheless, in *Paris*, many Holy Priests, who are as much revered as they are known; 'tis in such Persons you ought to put your Confidence. Give yourself the Trouble, as soon as Tomorrow comes, if you Judge proper, and go to one of this Sort, for Example, to Father R so remarkable for his admirable Preaching, and so sought after for his Confessions; make him, upon the sacramental Stool, a Confession of the same Tale you told to me, without naming any Names, not only to avoid Scandal, but to prevent any Suspicion of Partiality; you will then be able to judge the horrid Danger your Honour has been exposed to; and that I have said nothing more on this Subject, than what is perfectly conformable to the strictest Veracity.

After

After this wholesome Advice, which proved the Dependance I ought to have in his Probity, he changed the Discourse, and began to talk about my Mother; saying, he had lately heard from her, and that she was excessively troubled to know what was become of me. He did not conceal from me, how bitterly she complained of my Cruelty, in leaving *M. de St. Prueil*, and not advising with her, which she thought proved my Disregard of her, attributing it to the too great Confidence she had reposed in me.

I am not certain, what the Marquis's Intent was in talking about my Mother. But, if he designed to search my Heart, by making me sensible of my Cruelty to her, who brought me into the World, and my shameful Forgetfulness of her, it had the desired Effect. He no sooner began upon this Subject, but I was moved from the very Bottom of my Soul; and my Tears, which were scarcely dried up, began to flow afresh. The Marquis, far from endeavouring to comfort me, as he had done some Minutes before; in order to make me relent, now said every Thing he could in Favour of so tender a Parent. He was touched at my Tears, though, at the same Time, applauded himself for having occasioned them.

I was the more sensibly affected with what the Marquis said to me about *Madam de St. Prueil*, because I knew she always retained

a Friendship for him ; and that, in all Probability, she had complained to him of my Indifference, and want of natural Affection ; and this Idea, which he put in a very strong Light, moved me still more, and made me see very plainly, not only how blameable I was, but every Thing I ought to reproach myself withal on that Account.

The Marquis, perceiving my Sorrow increase every Moment, could not bear to behold me in such Trouble, he therefore tried all possible Means to give me Relief. Remember, Miss, upon my first coming hither, said he, I declared my Intention was, not to chagrin you. I am extremely concerned at your Affliction. Far from abandoning yourself to Grief, you ought to rejoice at what has happened to Day. For getting rid of a Man, that would have been your Ruin, sooner or later ; and for finding another, whose Regards are equal to your Merit ; and whose future Care will be entirely employed for your Happiness and Benefit. In order to attain which, I am persuaded, it will be thought convenient to attend your loving Mother. I will undertake to manage Matters so, it shall not appear you have ever been wanting in your Duty towards her. If this Resolution is approved of, I will engage to make it succeed, and to recover your lost Repose. I know, *Madam de St. Preuil* will be transported to see you again, and every
Thing

Thing shall be disposed in such a Manner, as not to have one Word mentioned of what is past.

This Proposal, tranquilized me much, which I frankly owned to the Marquis. There was nothing troubled me, but the Thoughts of the Journey; to obviate that Difficulty, he told me a Piece of News, which surprized me, and threw me into fresh Doubts. *M. de St. Preuil* was dangerously ill, and had dispatched a Messenger to my Mother, ordering her Return to *Paris* directly. All this was very embarrassing for me. Notwithstanding the great Desire I had to see my Mother, and live with her, I could not think of going to her House. I knew *M. de St. Preuil* but too well. The barely giving Occasion for Scandal, was a sufficient Reason with him to allow no Quarter——He hated Churchmen——It would be in vain to attempt to justify my Innocence, as I had been secreted by the Abbot, the Probability was against me, and there needed no more to ruin me in his Opinion for ever.

I could not sufficiently conceal these Uneasinesses from the Marquis, who gave a very near Guess at what occasioned them, and made use of those Advantages I let him gain over me so artfully. I therefore made no Secret of such Ideas as arose in my Mind on this Occasion; upon which, he confessed, he was informed the Secret relating to my

Birth ; and on that Account, had taken so much Pains to find me out, with a View of offering me all the Service in his Power, since I had thought proper to take my own Course, and live no longer with M. *de St. Preuil*. I was prodigiously surprized when he told me this. I asked him, with great Eagerness, by what Means he came to the Knowledge of that Secret. No-body could think my Mother would intrust him with it. Neither did I believe M. *de St. Preuil* would be guilty of such a Piece of Imprudence. It gave me so great a Concern at first, I was four several Times on the Point of betraying myself. Happy for me, the Marquis was eager to reply, or I had discovered all, and should have upbraided myself for it ever after. What he told me of this Affair made me a little easier, as I found he understood but Part of my History. He saw M. *de St. Preuil* the Evening before, who owned to him, that I was only his supposed Daughter ; and, as he was in Danger of dying, intended to make an authentic Declaration of it, that his lawful Heirs might not be deprived of any Part of his Fortune, to which I had not a Right to the least Farthing ; and for which Reason he sent for my Mother. From hence it was natural to conclude, there were no Hopes left for me, thus deprived of Relations, of Fortune, and of all Right or Claim to any. Young as I
was,

was, I could not look upon so mortifying a Situation without being shocked, though it was not impossible, with powerful Friends, and good Advisers, to have these Misfortunes alleviated. But where were mine? and, should I find any such, how unnatural would it be to intrust them with the Secret of my Birth, and my Mother's Reputation? Turn which Way I would, I saw nothing but Pain and Perplexity; and what added Weight to my Chagrin, was, I knew not what Course to take, nor who to confide in.

I should very gladly, if I durst, have put an Affair of such Importance under the Consideration of a Person so wise, and so understanding, as the Marquis appeared to be. But, besides the Shame of owning my Condition, and the Scruples I had with respect to my Mother's Reputation, I did not know him well enough to intrust him with a Confession of so delicate a Nature. However, as it was necessary to say something, I desired he would be so good not to forget my Interest when he saw *M. de St. Preuil* again; and above all, to contrive me an Interview with my Mother, unknown to any one. I had a great deal of Reason to be well satisfied with the obliging Answer he made me on this Subject; but his Behaviour afterwards, convinced me of his great Honour, and the Regard he had for me.

Not

Not imagining it was so late till I informed him, and that his Visit was very long; and by continuing it, my Reputation might suffer; he immediately rose up, telling me, I was too dear to him, and he respected me too well, not to observe the utmost Caution on this Occasion. He therefore took his Leave, promising to see me again in two Days at farthest, and would employ that Time in my Service, and prove by it, that my Interest was dearer to him than his own.

He was no sooner gone, but I shut myself into my Closet, where I gave a Loose to a thousand Reflections, each more dismal than the other. I could not, without a Sort of Spite mixed with Impatience, recal all those severe Remarks upon the Abbot's Conduct. Whatever Difficulty I found to acknowledge his Views, so criminal as they were represented, I had no Doubt about it, when I reflected on my last Conversation with him. I could not bring again to my Imagination without blushing, those Liberties he took; which, as the Marquis well observed, could not proceed from any good Motive, either in the Director or the Penitent. The more I thought upon this Indecency, the more I condemned my own Innocence and Stupidity.

However serious this Affair was, I nevertheless soon lost Sight of it, and employed my Thoughts entirely about those new ones the Marquis apprized me of, which were
much

much more important. My Mother's Return alarm'd me; though, to say the Truth, I believed myself excusable towards her, since she was the first who counselled me to follow implicitly the Abbot's Advice. I could not absolutely justify my Forgetfulness of her, in which I was blameable, as I did not inform her of my Departure from *M. de St. Preuil*. I went to a Retirement, without asking whither; and, after that, never wrote to her, as if I had been independent at my Age: Which was such a Want of Consideration, as cannot easily be justified.

To this Uneasiness, which was very reasonable, I joined the terrible Idea of that mortifying Situation *M. de St. Preuil* was going to throw me into, by informing all the World I was not his Daughter, but a supposed Child. And there did not seem any Possibility of preserving me from this shameful Disgrace. I could think of nothing but a Convent for my Protection, and that was a shocking Choice.

I was buried in these Sort of Reflections as the Clock struck Ten; when my new Maid came, and interrupted them, by intreating me to take my Supper, having been with me twice before on the same Errand; and now, pressing me in so engaging a Manner, I could not help complying. Happy for me, could she have dissipated that heavy Cloud which weighed me down, for I had
given

given myself up a Prey to Melancholy; and there was too much Reason for it, to be diverted by her Officiousness.

I had not been a Quarter of an Hour at Table, before I rose from it, and retired into my Chamber, because I would not be disturbed in my Meditations. I pretended to want Rest, so undressed myself, and went into Bed. By which Means I got shut of the assiduous *Mary Ann*; and, being quite alone, indulged my Melancholy, and abandoned myself to Sorrow.

I lay till about Two o'Clock in the Morning without ever closing my Eyes. Nothing could make me thus wakeful, but the intense thinking of my unhappy State. Nor was this my usual Custom; on the contrary, my Head used to be no sooner on the Pillow, but Sleep seized on all my Faculties. However, my Ideas and Sighs began to be confused, when I thought I heard the Noise of a Door opening very softly, and with great Precaution, which roused me in a Surprise, with Fear and Trembling. As I had heard a thousand Instances of People being murdered in their Beds, I did not in the least Question it must be a Robber. No Creature in the World could be more fearful than myself; judge therefore what a Condition I must be in, when I found, for certain, the Noise I heard, was at the Door of my own Apartment. I directly sunk down in my
Bed,

Bed, and tossed the Cloaths over my Head. I trembled, I held my Breath for Fear of being heard ; in short, never was poor Mortal in so frightened a Situation.

I listened most attentively to hear what passed ; and was but too easily convinced, some-body was got into my Room, walking on Tip-toes. I gave myself up for lost, and invoked Heaven, and all the Saints I could recollect, from the Bottom of my Heart. It was at this Time I made a Vow to renounce Matrimony, and devote myself to eternal Celibacy, if I should be so happy to escape this mortal Danger. I had no sooner determined on this, but I felt one of my Bed Curtains undraw, and a Voice cry, are you asleep ? Now, thinks I, all is over, I am a dead Woman to be sure ; and, disengaging myself from the Cloaths, fell on my Knees by the Side of the Bed, crying out, spare my Life, and take all I have. Get into your Bed again, my dear Child, replied the same Voice, I want neither your Life, nor your Purse ; be assured it is your best Friend, know me for your faithful Director, who is come to give you Proofs of his Attachment. Indeed Sir, said I, interrupting him very sharply, you would have done better, in letting it alone, and not put me into such a horrible Fright. I think a Visit at this unseasonable Hour, does not become a Man of your Cloth, which obliges me to bid you
be

be gone, and never more trouble me with your dangerous Company and Advice.

Though these Words were spoke in an angry Tone, I inwardly rejoiced the Adventure turned out in this Manner; and yet I was mortally piqued, that this Man, against whom I was greatly prejudiced, should be the Cause of that Terror I had been in. The Abbot, having never heard me talk in this Stile before, fetched a deep Sigh; and, throwing himself into a Chair, cry'd, what Miss! can it possibly be you, who talk to me in this Manner? What! have you suffered yourself to be prejudiced against me already; pray tell me wherefore? Heaven knows, since Yesterday, I have not had one Moment's Quiet; my Thoughts have been entirely employed, how to snatch you from those Dangers you are going to be precipitated into. I could not conveniently find Time, from my other necessary Occupations, till now; besides, it would have been very improper, to run the Hazard of meeting here with Men of the World, by whom it seems I am suspected, you understand me. The Design which brings me now, continued the Priest, is to conduct you to an Asylum, where you will be the happiest Person in the World, safe from the Seducers, and those Evils, which would have been the infallible Consequence of your easy Disposition. Is it not very plain, Miss, in order to destroy you,

you, they have endeavoured to ruin that Confidence you had in me? For they undoubtedly foresaw, I should watch incessantly for your Safety, and not suffer my Charge to be a Prey to ravenous Wolves. Ah! how badly am I rewarded for my Zeal, ungrateful, cry'd this perfidious Man, affecting a tender Tone! instead of increasing that Affection you so often boasted of, and the Acknowledgments you formerly made, for my precious Care, in preserving your Honour from those Demons, who designed to attack it, and were digging a Pit under your Feet. How dare you rebel against a tender Director? What do I say? You, who could talk so cruelly to him, and treat him, as if there was Cause for Complaint. You hate him already, as if he was your greatest Enemy.

I was too much provoked, as well as prepossessed against the Abbot, to be any Ways moved with this pathetic Discourse. In vain did he attempt to persuade me by his Eloquence. I was determined what to do, so stedfastly fixed, nothing could shake my Resolution. Far from returning a favourable Answer, I very seriously reiterated my former Request, that he would take his Leave, and be gone. Having had Time to recover myself, and consider, I added, he would do well to return me those Effects he had of mine, for I was going to my Mother, and should

should be very glad to deposit them in her Hands; and he must certainly agree, she was the properest Trustee. I don't know what you mean, reply'd the Abbot coolly, nor what Effects you are asking about; to be sure they must be deposited with somebody else, and your Fright, undoubtedly makes you mistake the Person. By your Talk, you would seem to insinuate, as if there were some-thing due from me. Sure enough, if we come to a fair Reckoning, I believe the Balance will be found greatly on my Side. I don't dream, when I say every Thing here, and all you have, belongs to me. Another Time, I shall speak more plainly; and if there should be a Necessity for it, I am able to prove what I say. In short, I have one Word to add, which is this. If you are so inconsiderate, to give yourself Airs, and talk big, I must inform you, Miss, in spite of your Lover's boasted Power, and the mighty Declaration he made To-day in your Favour, whoever despises a Man of my Cloth, he shall not escape unpunished.

I vow to your Highness, notwithstanding all the Marquis had told me of the Abbot, I never could have imagined him guilty of such perfidious Actions. I was both offended and terrified to such a Degree, I could hardly think of an Expression to reply. However, I at last told him, whatever Cause he had
given.

given me to suspect his Levity, it was impossible for me to believe he would have denied the receiving a Charge, which he himself obliged me to intrust him with; and though he said otherwise, I did not question, but he would return them the next Day; that I had no Intention of troubling him, that Matters must be brought to a very great Extremity if I did. I talked to him in this moderate Way, because I reflected the bad Consequences, which might attend the pushing Things to an Issue, with so dangerous a Man.

But the Wretch pursued his own Designs, and did not trouble his Head about what I said, with regard to his Honesty. In a Tone that would intimidate any unexperienced young Person, he cry'd, if you are so thoughtless (I don't know if he did not use a harsher Expression) to meddle any further in this Affair, or ever after speak ill of me, and it comes to my Knowledge, I'll make you repent it the longest Day of your Life. In Return for the just Reproaches I could not help making on this Occasion, and for the Risque he had exposed my Innocence to, he loaded me with the most opprobrious Names that could possibly mortify me. O Heavens! that a Man could carry his Malice to so inveterate a Pitch! Would you believe it, great Princess? He upbraided me with my Birth; and assured me, if I gave
him

him any Sort of Disturbance, I might depend upon his joining with the Heirs of *M. de St. Preuil* to prove the Ignominy of it. As to my Mother, he would make it his Business to give her such an Account of me, I might expect to meet with the Reception I deserved; and, in short, he would create me so much Trouble, I should repent I had ever attempted to give him any the longest Day I lived.

After this odious Treatment, which made me shed a Torrent of Tears, the Scoundrel retired. I was too much awake, not to judge which Way he introduced himself into my Chamber. Your Highness will be so good to recollect, in the Description I gave you of my Apartment, a Back-door I mentioned, which opened upon the Stairs. The Abbot, very artfully, reserved the Key of this Door for his own private Use. This Thought, which came into my Head as soon as he was retired, made me rise to justify my Opinion. I found every Thing in its proper Place, I did not doubt therefore it must be as I imagined. I was considering, for some Time, what Method I should take to prevent a second Visit; for should it come into the Director's Head to return again, what had I not to fear? The Moment my Candle was lighted, I ran to the Door in Question, pretty certain there were Bolts on it; but I was mistaken, they were taken

Care

Care of long before ; so that I found myself exposed to a Danger I wanted to prevent.

However, I thought the best Way to avoid being exposed to fresh Hardships from this mischievous Fellow, would be, to call up *Mary Ann*, and oblige her to sit by me during the Remainder of the Night. Could I have imagined, that this Thought, which was a very natural one, in the Situation I was in, would have produced new Proofs of the Abbot's Vileness ? Does your Highness expect it ? No certainly, you cannot possibly suspect a Man, whose Business it is to preach up Virtue, should be a shameful Corrupter of it. Provoked as I was at him, if I had not seen, I could not have believed it.

I was always too indulgent to my Servants, nor even ever disobliged them if I could help it, which was one of my greatest Foibles. For Fear of waking *Mary Ann* in a Surprise, imagining she was fast asleep, I entered her Chamber very softly on my Toes. But behold, how amazed ! when I opened the Curtains of her Bed. Your Highness must excuse my mentioning any further Particulars. You will without Doubt comprehend, by my instantly retireing, I had beheld too much of that Mystery of Iniquity. In vain did my perfidious Director endeavour to skreen himself from my Sight ; I discovered him, which he suspected. Any one, but he, would have been ashamed, after such a Scandal,

Scandal, ever to have appeared again : But has such a Wretch any Modesty ? He was apprehensive, as he had given me so many Provocations for Complaint, I should not, after such a Discovery, spare him in the least; he therefore tried to intimidate me. The Moment after I was returned into my Chamber again, he followed ; and looking upon me, with Fury painted in his Eyes, take Care, said he, that the Transactions of this Night never transpire. You know me, and how capable I am of exerting my Resentment to the utmost Extremity, if I should have any Reason to complain of your Indiscretion. Do not flatter yourself with the least Hopes of Success, with Regard to any daring Attempts upon my Reputation ; for know, I am protected by the greatest People in the Kingdom ; and that there is not a Woman about-the Court, in high Life, but will interest herself in my Defence. Be wise therefore, and make a proper Use of this Advice.

The Arrogance and Impudence of the Man, after what had just happened, astonished me to such a Degree, I could not open my Lips. Whoever had accidentally seen us together at this Time, would have imagined me the guilty Person. This Monster, who undoubtedly thought I was reproaching myself in my own Mind for having quarrelled with him, came up with a coaxing
Air ;

Air ; and said, notwithstanding the Reasons given him to be dissatisfied with me, he was willing to a Reconciliation, on Condition I would return to him in good Earnest ; that he was naturally well-disposed, and always interested himself (as I knew) in every Thing which concerned me ; and to give me a fresh Proof of it, would undertake to engage Madam *de St. Preuil* to acknowledge me for her Daughter ; in short, I need only say the Word, he was ready to restore me his Friendship, and put me into so happy a Situation, I should one Day applaud myself, I had on his Account sacrificed a Man, who would perpetuate my Misfortunes, which was all that could be expected from him.

I found myself so full of Indignation at his returning a second Time in that wicked perfidious Manner, I turned my Back upon him ; first declaring, however, that if he had the Assurance to stay a Moment longer, I would raise all the Neighbours with my Out-cries. This Threat dissembarassed me, though he continued, to the very last Moment, threatening me with what he was capable of doing. At going away, he double-locked my Door, possibly to prevent being surprized a second Time, or perhaps, for some other Reasons I did not trouble my Head to fathom.

I was haunted with most dismal Reflections, the Moment I found myself alone, re-

volving in my Mind the many Dangers I had escaped. This Enquiry made me look upon Men as Monsters, capable of every Outrage, imagining they were all like *M. de St. Preuil*, and Father *Trainasseau*. The many wicked Tricks I recollected of the latter, irritated me against the whole Sex. I believed them all made after the same Model. The Marquis himself, though so honest a Man in Appearance, might not he counterfeit? Had I a sufficient Knowledge of the World, to distinguish the true from the false? Undoubtedly no, and according to my present Condition, the best Method I could take of conducting myself, was to be always upon my Guard, not to take a single Step without mature Deliberation.

However, a Reflection I made in Favour of the Marquis *de Sberling*, brought me back to a little Confidence in him, he having advised me to go and consult Father *R. . . .* about my present Situation, than which nothing could give me a more convincing Proof of his Honesty. I knew that celebrated Jesuit by Character, and had often heard him talked of; in such Terms, as would prevent any Grounds for Suspicion. I imagined, if the Marquis intended to deceive me, he never would have recommended so revered a Guide. The more I thought of this Recommendation, the more I persuaded myself it ought not to be neglected.

My

My Situation was so delicate, in every Respect, it behoved me to get the best Advice I could. The more I considered, the more I was confirmed in my Design. I lay expecting Day-light with great Impatience, that I might repair to the Jesuit's, and endeavour to procure a proper Relief for my frightened Conscience, and to determine me what Course to steer. I was resolved not to continue in my present Apartments, but could not conclude any Thing on that Head, till I learned from the Marquis if my Mother was returned, or if he had contrived me a Conference with her, as he gave me Hopes.

I continued thinking in this Manner, till Day appear'd, when I rose and went directly to the Window, intending to desire the first Person I saw, to send me a Lock-smith to open my Door, suspecting after what had passed, that *Mary Ann* was eloped, and I left alone in the Lodging. But hearing somebody knock very hard at the Street Door, made me directly fancy it might be a Messenger from the Abbot, who very probably had taken Time seriously to reflect on his own Behaviour, as well as the Marquis *de Sherling's* Menaces, which were of too much Consequence to be disregarded; and these Conjectures proved true, for I presently heard, first my Anti-chamber, and then my Bed-chamber Door open with my own Keys.

sent back by this Messenger, who at the same Time delivered me a Letter, in which I found the following Words.

L E T T E R.

“ **B**Y your late Behaviour, Miss, you
 “ seem so prejudiced, and so bitter a-
 “ gainst me, I thought it would be very
 “ improper to bring myself, you know
 “ what. And on the other hand, I believe
 “ you would think it very imprudent to
 “ intrust them with a Stranger. To obviate
 “ all which, give yourself the Trouble to
 “ come to me this Morning. You may
 “ possibly be of Opinion too, after the Dis-
 “ putes we have had, that I ought not to
 “ see you any more than this once. Don’t
 “ be under any Apprehension of my up-
 “ braiding you; my only Aim is, the being
 “ in a Condition to take an eternal Farewel
 “ of each other.”

“ P. S. In all Probability you will not
 “ continue in your Lodgings; I desire there-
 “ fore you would bring me the Keys of
 “ them. In Case you have made any salu-
 “ tary Reflections, I am willing to do you
 “ one more, and the last good Office, and
 “ that is, the recommending you to a Con-
 “ vent in high Repute, where you will meet
 “ with a very kind Reception, on my Ac-
 “ count;

“count; there they will give you such an
“Idea of your old Director, as you will find
“much more reasonable, than that you
“have a little too inconsiderately adopted.”

My Experience of the Abbot's artful Contrivances, prevented my being cajoled by him now. I plainly discovered his Diffimulation, by the Contrivance of this Letter; for, in the first Place, he denied I had ever deposited any Thing in his Hands; and afterwards pretended to make Restitution at his own House; which could be no other than a Pretence to decoy me thither, in order to my being confined, or sent to some obscure Place, with such a Recommendation, as never more to find a Friend to protect me. This Opinion was so strongly imprinted in my Mind, I chose rather to risque the losing my Jewels, than attempt to recover them at so great a Hazard. However, I sent him an Answer in the following Lines, because I would not have to reproach myself with an Omission of that Sort hereafter.

B I L L E T.

“**N**OTHING can hinder, Sir, your
“bringing me those Effects you have
“of mine. I shall wait at Home all Day
“for them. But if they are not brought
“to me, as I expect, I shall never speak to
“you more myself about them.”

I dispatched the Messenger with this Billet, absolutely purposing to wait for the Abbot. But, because I durst not trust myself alone with him, I sent to desire Madam *Severin's* Company, to spend the Day with me; she readily accepted the Invitation, and came to me directly. As I had eat but a meer Trifle the Day before, I sent for three or four Petits-Patés, with which, and some other little Things I had in the House, we sat down and made a comfortable Repast, with a very good Appetite. My Neighbour, as I have hinted before, was one of the best-natured Women in the World, and did not contribute a little by her innocent Sallies to dissipate my Sadness; which, together with two or three Glasses of some pretty small white Wine, my Tranquility was restored; after this, I insensibly closed my Eyes, not having slept a Wink the whole Night before; but my complaisant Neighbour said, I ought to be more at my Ease, and persuaded me to go into Bed, promising not to stir a Moment from me.

Upon this Assurance, I abandoned myself to soft Repose. In my Life, I never slept so sweetly. It was near Six o'Clock before I awoke. Madam *Severin* had followed my Example, and slept in an Easy-chair by my Bed-side. We were laughing about our Debauch, when some-body knocked at the Door. I made Signs to my Neighbour, who

who was getting up, not to open it, till I was ready. Being of Opinion, it could be no-body but the Abbot, whom I would by no Means suffer in my Chamber before I was dressed. As soon as I was in a Condition to appear, Madam *Severin* opened the Door, when a tall Man in Black appeared, asking for Miss *Agnes*, without any other Denomination. Upon which I advanced towards him, saying, I am the Person. This Man then took out of his Pocket a Parcel sealed up, telling me, the Abbot *Trainasseau* had charged him to deliver it into my own Hands, and take a Receipt according to the Form he had sent. For fear of acting imprudently, I sat me down to examine the Parcel. I found, upon opening it, a little Box, in which were some Jewels, with a Billet as follows.

B I L L E T.

“ **H**ERE are the Jewels in Question,
“ which I send by a safe Hand, since
“ you would not take the Trouble to fetch
“ them yourself. You will send a Receipt
“ according to the under-written Form.”

By the luckiest Chance in the World, it happened, Madam *Severin*, being the Daughter of a Jeweller, whilst I was writing the Receipt, according to the Form my Director

had dictated himself, she was looking over the Diamonds. When I went to deliver the Acquittance to the Bearer, she stopt my Hand. Forbear, said she, pray let me whisper a Word in your Ear. Surprized at, this, I leaned towards her to hear what she had to say. I give you Warning, said she, these Stones are all false. False! replied I, with Astonishment, it cannot be, they cost above twenty thousand Livers. Take Care what you are doing, continued my Neighbour, so many have passed through my Hands, I ought to know. And upon this Occasion it was she told me of her being a Goldsmith's Daughter, and her Father merchandising in Diamonds, she was brought up with a Knowledge of them, and pretended to as much Skill as the most celebrated Jeweller.

This was too much not to make an Impression upon me; nevertheless, I could hardly imagine any Man, who had a Reputation to lose, could be guilty of such a Piece of Roguery. Without a more particular Examination therefore I would not pretend to determine any Thing. I desired Madam Severin to send her Apprentice to call a Coach, in order to be better satisfied about these Stones, by getting the Opinion of some noted Jewellers. Whatever Precautions we took not to be understood by the tall Man in Black, who was waiting for the Receipt, he

he learnt, or some ways guessed at Part of our Project. I perceive, said he, you are not yet ready to dispatch me; tell me when you shall, and I'll go about another Affair I have upon my Hands, and call again.

Without guessing his Reasons, his leaving us did not displease me, for his Presence put us under a Sort of Restraint. I bid him come again at Eight o'Clock, it being now about half an Hour after Six, and I was in Hopes we should have Time to do our Business before he returned.

As soon as he was gone, my Neighbour advised me, after we had proved the Falseness of the Diamonds, to go directly to a Commissary, and make my Complaint. For fear of giving her a greater Insight into my Affairs than I was willing she should have, I told her, I knew a better Method of doing myself Justice, and that I only wanted to be satisfied in the Expedient we had agreed upon. Mrs. *Severin* was one of the most agreeable Persons that could be, but very curious, and had several Times attempted to sift me. She saw me a young Creature, independent at seventeen Years of Age, and judged, by my Jewels and my Cloaths, I was no common Person. She, at first, fancied I was one of those honest Girls, who, without Noise and Attendance, manage their little Concerns privately. To give me a Confidence in her, she had hinted several

Times in such a Manner as to make me understand, if I was in that Way, she should not have less Consideration for me. As she was not in very good Circumstances, it is possible she would not have been sorry, if I had been a Practitioner that Way, to have made her my Confident.

The Sight of my Jewels, which she thought were genuine, before she examined them, determined her, I doubt not, to intrigue for me. Their being false, did not, (as she has told me since) alter her Sentiments. She believed at first, they were designed for a Bait, and given with a View relative to what she then thought my Occupation; for which Reason, she took so much Pains to undeceive me. As no such Notion ever entered into my Head, I only suspected her of too much Curiosity, which put me upon my Guard when I conversed with her; perhaps, if I had suspected her, I might have laid myself more open, by endeavouring to rectify her Mistake.

We were each of us taken up with our own Ideas, which I dare say were very different, when some-body knocked, and a Coach stopping at the same Time, we imagined it was that I had ordered, and got up directly to go. But when I opened the Door, and saw the Abbot, followed by his Messenger, what could I guess! Had I been alone, I should have screamed aloud, unable
to

to contain myself, and probably said something that might have betray'd me. This Thought withheld me. I received the Priest civilly, and yet very coolly. I observed, in passing by, he cast his Eye upon my Neighbour, and looked earnestly at her, as if he wanted to discover who she was, that he might take his Measures accordingly. He was no sooner in my Chamber, but he seated himself in an Elbow-chair, puffing and blowing, and wiping his Face, as People do when they are heated and out of Breath. I made Signs for Mrs. *Severin* to sit near me, which she did, and looked strangely surprized, like a Person that wants to dive into some mighty Secret they cannot comprehend.

As for the tall Man in Black, he was seated upon a Cricket a little below his Master.

When the Abbot had recovered his Breath, he addressed himself to me, in a Tone very soft and composed. I am come to wait upon you, Miss, in order to be satisfied in a Piece of News, which has surprized, as well as very much shocked me. This Person, knowing I was at a House in the Neighbourhood, came and informed me, you suspected the Jewels I gave him in Charge to return, were counterfeit, and that you was going forth with Madam there, undoubtedly, to be better satisfied. I judged the Affair of too

much Importance to defer an *Eclaircissement*. If the Diamonds are false, it behoves me to take a proper Course immediately. I intrusted them, with a Man of my Acquaintance, in whom I have always found the strictest Probity. He is one of our richest Merchants, who, happening to see these Jewels at my House, and thinking them extraordinary curious, should be obliged to me, he said, if I would intrust them with him, for a Pattern, having received Orders from a *German* Princess, for something of that Sort. I had no Reason to suspect him; however, as it is an Affair of Consequence, and that we may not proceed lightly in it, with your Approbation, we will go together to whatever Jeweller you please, and after we have examined Matters properly, I shall proceed accordingly.

As nothing could be objected to so fair a Proposal, I did not care to enter into any farther Detail. - This I thought the most propable Way to determine the Certainty of those valuable Effects of mine, without exciting any one's Curiosity. Mrs. *Severin* was very ready in observing to me, that Mons. *L^e Abbé* could do nothing better. During this Discourse, he got up, and asked me for the Jewels. Then taking them in his Hand, and looking slightly over them, I don't understand them well enough to be a Judge, said he. I have examined them very carefully ;

carefully; and will answer for their being false, answered my Neighbour. The Director replied again to this Declaration, and said, he had known the most skilful mistaken in the like Case. Mrs. *Severin*, who loved to talk, took this Opportunity to brag of her Knowledge, and Taste, telling the Abbot, what she before related to me on the same Subject.

Whilst she was displaying her Skill, I happened to cast an Eye upon my old Director. I vow to your Highness, I was so simple as to pity him; I saw such a Load of Chagrin so strongly expressed in his Eyes, nay, I could not help being moved, he seemed so overwhelmed with Sorrow. If he had had the same Command of himself, and behaved with more Discretion the Night before, I doubt, thro' the foolish Honesty of my Heart, I might have been reconciled to him again. That Air of Candour and Simplicity which appeared in his Countenance, during the Adventure I am now describing, would have imposed on a better Understanding than mine.

After the Abbot's looking lightly over the Jewels, he put them up, advising us to go before the Shops were shut. When we were in the Coach, Mrs. *Severin*, observing he carried the Box in his Hand, said, he had better put them in his Pocket, for fear of Accidents. He answered, they were much
safer

safer in that Manner, for his Pockets, like a strong Box, would be first searched.

As we were going along, he desired Mrs. *Severin* would direct the Coachman what Jeweller's to stop at, upon a Presumption she was best acquainted with the most noted. She accordingly named three. As we were entering the first Shop, he delivered the Box into my Hands. In short, upon Examination, the Diamonds did not only prove genuine, but the finest in the World, and every Lapidary was of the same Opinion. I returned home much piqued for innocently making a Man uneasy, whom, I must own, might justly be accused of Dissoluteness, and yet ought not to have been suspected for a Cheat, on such slight Grounds.

He brought us back, and it was proper I should acknowledge the Receipt of my Jewels. As the Acquittance was ready, I did not suffer him to wait a Moment, but gave it him. He made a profound Reverence, and retired without saying one Word. Mrs. *Severin* having boasted so much of her Skill, was greatly confounded at the Lapidary's contradicting her before us; and being very much at a Loss how to extricate herself, pretended, she had been absent so long from Home, it was necessary to look after her Family. I made her promise, when she had seen every Thing in Order, to return and sup with me. Though my Fears were much abated,

abated, with regard to my old Director, since what had just happened, and I was better satisfied of his Honesty, nevertheless I could not help trembling at the Thoughts of being alone, which was the Reason of my using very pressing Instances to Mrs. *Severin*. It may be, on another Occasion, I should not have given her an Opportunity to refuse me, as she did several Times, probably, to make me value her the more. I was no sooner alone, but I carefully fastened all my Bolts. I forgot to tell you, in the Morning I sent for a Lock-smith, and had some immediately set on. More easy on this Account, I opened the Box where my Jewels were in a Paper, and locked them up with my Money in a Casket I had bought on purpose, for the more easy transporting them, in Case of Need.

During the Remainder of the Evening, nothing passed worth repeating. Mrs. *Severin*, according to her Promise, came and supped with me, and brought one of her Daughters in her Hand. She soon got the better of that little Disgrace she had suffered, and recovered her Good-humour again, renewing all her former Protestations. In all Probability, the Sight of my Jewels augmented her Zeal, and gave her an high Opinion of my Riches. Having accidentally mentioned my Uneasiness at the Thoughts of being left alone, she offered to lie in my Chamber,

Chamber; and tho' I pressed her to accept Part of my Bed, she had the Consideration not to incommode me, and fetched down a Mattraſs to lay upon my Couch. Had I been indigent, should I have been treated with so much Complaisance? Behold what Life is; none are respected unless in happy Circumstances.

It was no sooner Day, but I arose. The Marquis *de Sherling's* Advice to visit Father R was fresh in my Memory. I would have gone the Night before, only for the Affair of my Jewels, which I had at Heart. I expected to obtain great Knowledge from the Conference I proposed to have with this Director, who was esteemed as wise as he was enlightened; and that I might be directed with greater Certainty, was determined to conceal nothing from him. As soon as I had dressed myself, I asked Mrs. *Severin* to accompany me, which she readily consented to. I thought it would be advisable not to conceal it from her. Much surprized at this Confidence, she told me, I was very devout at my Age; for her own Part, she acknowledged herself greatly deficient. We discoursed in this Manner till we arrived at the Jesuit's College. I had never been there before, and did not well know what Method I should take to find the Priest I wanted. It was so early nobody was in the Church, and until some one of the House appeared,

appeared, I kneeled down in a Confessional, where I recollected myself, and considered in what Manner I should accost my new Director, who seemed pointed out to me by Providence. However prudent my Proceedings were, that did not prevent my feeling a very great Anxiety.

I waited above half an Hour without seeing any one I could speak to, and was afraid of tiring Mrs. *Severin's* Patience, which made me advance towards the Grate of the Sanctuary, having observed a young Jesuit just go in; but I was hardly moved from my Place, when a Lad in a plain Dress coming up to me, asked if I wanted any one of the College. Being strongly prepossessed he was one of the Boys belonging to the Sacristsy, I desired to speak with Father R. . . . at his Confessional. He assured me he would directly seek for him, and bring me an Answer immediately.

He returned punctually at the End of the Miserere, and told me, the Confessor I enquired for was gone into the City, and would not return till Six in the Evening. He added, if I intended coming again at that Time, he would take Care to inform him, that I might not be disappointed.

All this appeared so natural, I promised to be at his Confessional without fail by Six o'Clock, where I should wait for him. I then went and joined my Neighbour, and made

made her acquainted with the Obligation I was under to come again in the Evening. She assured me no Business should prevent her accompanying me, to shew her Attachment.

Going out of the Church, I thought I espied the Abbot *Trainasseau* in a Coach, which stopped at the Corner of the Street. This Apprehension brought the Colour into my Face. However, I recovered myself, with an Opinion that this Meeting was accidental, or that this Man had made so strong an Impression upon my Imagination, I might take somebody else for him, because of the Resemblance.

Mrs. *Severin* was too artful and cunning not to observe the Agitation this Accident had thrown me into. She asked me divers Questions, pretending, she interested herself greatly in every Thing which concerned me. But I kept myself upon the Reserve, as I had done before. The strange Transactions which so lately passed, between my Director and me, made me distrustful; and it was become a Maxim with me, never to trust any one I did not perfectly know. The Example of my Mother ever rising in my Mind could not easily be effaced.

It was hadly half an Hour after Five when we got into the Coach. Some Rain had fallen, and the Days were grown short, being now the latter End of Autumn, so
that

that Night came on before we could get to the Church. It was lighted only with one Lamp, and two Wax-Candles, which burnt before the Custodia. The Confessional, which was shewn me for Father R 's, was at some Distance from the high Altar, and consequently very obscure. The Moment after I had placed myself, I felt somebody pull me by the Sleeve. Turning about very quickly, I perceived a Man, who pray'd me to tell him, if I was the Person that came in the Morning to enquire for father R My Answer having satisfied him, I was, he promised I should not wait long; the Father would be at his Confessional in a Minute.

I thanked Heaven Things turned out so favourably, and promised myself great Benefit from so happy an Opportunity.

The Moment I began to say my Prayers, I heard the Confessional entered, and presently after the Lattice opened, I was asked, if I was the Person who had been there in the Morning. Yes, reverend Father, replied I, with some Emotion, your Reputation has brought me to you. I am a young Person, left to myself, and stand in Need of solid Counsel. I humbly beg you will have Compassion upon my Innocence, and guide me thro' the fatal Embarrassment I find myself unhappily involved in. The Director was silent for some Time, as if he expected I should

should proceed farther; but, finding I waited for his Answer, he made me one agreeable to what I had said, and encouraged me to explain myself freely to him, promising to behave in the same Manner towards me, and that he would interest himself, as far as was convenient, in my temporal as well as spiritual Welfare.

Having great Confidence in this Answer, I entered into a long Detail of every Thing that had happened to me, without omitting a single Circumstance. I related Word for Word, the whole Transactions of the Abbot *Trainasseau*, without mentioning his Name, according to the Marquis's Advice. I did not spare him in the least, but painted him in the blackest Colours. When I had finished, the Confessor asked if I had nothing more to say; to which I answered in the Negative. He then began by a very severe Reprimand for the little Regard I had shewn a Priest, by which, I did not only wound that Charity we should always preserve, but even common Honesty. It seems to me also, added he, (speaking always in a deep low Voice) that there is a great deal of Hatred and Resentment in all you have said relating to this Minister. I have followed you thro' every the minutest Circumstance you have been telling me with the strictest Attention. The Place I occupy does not allow me to make Use of any Artifice or Subterfuge.

You

You have got some chimerical Scruples in your Head; and in short, if I find any Thing blameable in the Conduct of your Director, it is his being too solicitous to put Perfection in such a Point of View, that you might be able to comprehend it.

You complain of your Director's Want of Decency in his Behaviour; and upon what Foundation pray is such a Calumny grounded? Upon the Opinion of a Man of the World, whom you ought to suspect, whom you love, by your own Confession, and he without Doubt, has some criminal Design, since he begins by forcing you from a Man, who would protect you by his Prudence from the pernicious Intentions of this Seducer.

Is it possible you should not with half an Eye discover the Artifice? If you would reflect ever so little, and put a proper Confidence in my Counsels, you would return to yourself, and not judge so imprudently and rashly for the future.

After this Discourse, the Director I was with recapitulated with a wonderful Memory (which I admired at) every interesting Circumstance of my Story; then advancing by Degrees, he justified, with such ingenious Turns, the discreet Conduct of my Director, with regard to me. If there was any Thing, he said, reprobable in his Conduct, it was the Indiscretion of his Zeal and Imprudence, which

which endangered a Reputation, that ought to be much dearer to him than me. He afterwards painted, in the most striking manner, the Blackness of my Ingratitude, in calumniating him, and supposing him guilty of Crimes upon Appearances undoubtedly false; for he might be found with my Servant alone, and yet give no Cause to be suspected of any Thing criminal or indecent, having a Right, in Quality of Director, to enquire privately of her after my Conduct, and to advertise a Girl, placed there by him, not to listen to any suspicious Schemes, that might be prejudicial to my Character.

But this was not all. He assured me, if I did not repair the Scandal I had occasioned, by putting the Lamb in Competition with the Wolf, as I had done, by confiding to a Man of the World (who had no Religion) the Secrets of the Sacrament, and exposing a Minister of the Church to Humiliation, I must not flatter myself with the least Hopes, that any Tribunal would grant a Remission for Crimes of so deep a Dye; and without a Satisfaction proportioned to the Offence, I must not expect Mercy; in short, he said, he trembled at my Condition, since he saw Hell actually open to my Feet.

In a Word, this Man talked to me with such Vehemence, and laid these strong Arguments so home to me, I began to think myself in great Tribulation. I was too
timorous,

timorous, and had too little Experience of the World, to pretend to dispute; otherwise, I could have made him an Answer to many Things, but my Tears did that Office. This was, undoubtedly, what he, whom I took for Father R expected. He no sooner perceived it, but he changed his Tone, he called me by the tenderest Names, and the properest to sooth me. Courage, my dear Child, cry'd he, the Lord be for ever praised, Grace begins to work in your Heart. You have offended in the cruellest Manner a wise Director, who loved you, even to the making it his chief Delight, to be employed for your Salvation and Happiness. You must return to him in all Sincerity. You must sacrifice to him that Seducer, whose Presence created all this Trouble. I will undertake to go and prepare him, that he may never mention what is past, and that you may enjoy the salutary Happiness of recovering a Guide, who alone can conduct you in that delicate Course you are ready to enter into. Don't be afraid of his Severity, he will open the Arms of his Charity, and restore you into the Sheepfold of the Elect, from whence you have been most artfully drawn by the deceits of Satan.

When the pretended Father R had proceeded thus far in his Exhortations, he suddenly stopt, and left the Confessional with such Precipitation, I was surprized; however,

ever, as I did not know what Avocations he might have to call him away so unexpectedly, I thought no more of it. I was about to rise, intending to come again the next Day, when I perceived some-body pass close by me, and I plainly saw a Father enter the Confessional again; imagining it was Father R returned to dismiss me, I replaced myself, to hear what he had further to say. You come very late, said a Voice, very different from that I had confessed to; I have not Time at present to hear you. If I had not entered by Accident through the front Door of the Church, and passed by my Confessional, you would have waited in vain, because I should not have come this Way.

This surprized me, and at the same Time confirmed my Suspicion. I answered him according to the Idea I had of the Matter. You astonish me, said he, there is not a Person belonging to the College occupies this Confessional but myself. Nevertheless I have just confessed, said I, to one who called himself father R It is an Imposture, said he, that was speaking to you; there is no Father R but me, and I must have this Mystery cleared up; it is therefore necessary we should know each other, which the Obscurity we are in will not admit of, neither is it convenient to stay here any longer; let us go to the other Side, and I will stay to hear you, notwithstanding the
lateness

lateness of the Evening. We went up to the high Altar, discoursing in this Manner, where there was Light enough to see each other. Very well, said he, upon our coming into the Light, do you know me now? I have not that Honour, replied I; but, finding myself at a most dangerous Crisis, with Regard to my Salvation, as well as temporal Conduct, you was recommended to me as an enlightened Guide, capable to instruct as well as direct me in the right Way. He seemed satisfied with this Answer, and yet wanted to know who it was recommended me to him. I made no manner of Scruple to own it was the Marquis *de Sberling*, very glad of so favourable an Opportunity to inform him of the Marquis's good Opinion. The answer the Jesuit made, was an Encomium on the Marquis. The Marquis, said he, is a very gallant Man, as much admired for his personal Merit, as his high Birth. Since you come by so good a Recommendation, I shall have no Sort of Difficulty; but you must excuse me for a Moment; I shall be at your Service presently.

Mrs. *Severin*, whose Patience began to be tired, came up to me, and asked, if I intended to lie all Night in the Church. I could not help laughing, though in no great Humour for it, and intreated her to have a few Minutes longer Patience.

I was so prejudiced against the Abbot *Trainasseau*, I had no Sort of Doubt but this Trick was a Contrivance of his, and was thoroughly convinced of it when I recollected, his whole Discourse tended to bring about a Reconciliation. This fresh Proof of his Knavery, and the Disgust this Adventure gave me, occasioned my being completely irritated against him. I had a good Mind twenty Times to have gone away, and never more put myself into the Hands of any Director. But Heaven prevented my falling a Prey to this Temptation; for, when I considered the Marquis *de Sherling* (whom I had been told the Moment before was a Man of Honour) assured me there were many holy Priests in *Paris*, I thought it would be wrong, to draw such evil Consequences from having met with Cheats and Hypocrites; I therefore persevered in my Resolution, of conducting myself by the Advice of Father *R* believing he merited the high Opinion all the World entertained of him.

Thus was my Imagination employed, when the Door of the Choir opened, and three Jesuits entered; two of them kneeled down before the high-Altar, and the third came up to me. I judged father *R* was scrupulous about being alone with a Woman in the Confessional so late, and for Decency Sake, had taken this wise Precaution, which

I thought

I thought very commendable, and it helped to strengthen my Confidence in him.

I shall not enter into the Particulars of this second Confession. Let it suffice, that I was charmed with father R his Discourse was a sovereign Balm to sooth my anxious Heart. The Advice he gave me was perfectly compleat. He was very circumspect with Regard to Father *Trainasseau*, advising me to avoid all Occasions of seeing him, and never to disclose what had passed between the Abbot and me to that very Moment, giving me to understand, it was a Sacrifice which Charity required, and that I should offend Heaven, if I was the Cause of irreligious People's turning the Ministers of the Gospel into Ridicule.

After discoursing upon other Subjects equally wise and edifying, he desired me to call upon him again, in case my Mother (to whom it was adviseable I should go, provided my Virtue was in no Danger) was not as yet returned, promising, since I had so great a Dislike to a Convent, he would enquire out a proper Place for my Abode, where I should be genteely entertained. It was his Advice also, to bring with me, the first Visit I should make him, those Jewels I mentioned, in order to verify the Ideas that occurred to him whilst I was relating that Part of my History. In short, my Princess, I had all the Reason in the World to be satisfied with

this new Acquaintance, which I resolved to thank the Marquis *de Sberling* for, whom I expected to see the next Day, according to his Promise.

Mrs. *Severin*, perceiving my Mind more at Ease, congratulated me on the Occasion. Upon our return back, she invited me to her House, where we found the Table spread, and every Thing in order for Supper. I did not require much Persuasion. Her eldest Daughter, *Juliet*, who was about my Age, offer'd her Service, and pressed me to let her take off my Capuchin. As this amiable Girl will hereafter have a Share in my Adventures, it may not be amiss if I give you here her Portrait. She was fair, tall, and well shaped, her Face was rather oval than round, she had large Eyes, which were too lively for her bashful Look, and made it seem affected; her Nose was handsom, and her Mouth admirably well made; she was rather too thin, but her Skin was exquisitely beautiful. She had a Smile, which was infinitely graceful. As to her Behaviour and Understanding, I shall have frequent Occasion to mention them hereafter.

Mrs. *Severin* had two more Daughters, but Nature having bestowed her personal Endowments so lavishly on the eldest, she had nothing left to bestow on the two youngest. There was a Son too, older than *Juliet*, a meer Booby, not well favoured, and yet

more

more simple; he was under the Care of a Journeyman, a lusty Fellow about Thirty, who affected to be entertaining, and thought himself very important, by having a large Point d'Espagne Hat very fiercely cocked.

I soon observed M. *de Palise*, which was the Name of this young Man, sighed for beautiful *Juliet*, but I believed at the same Time, he was not her *Adonis*. Great Attention being shewn to me, as Queen of the Feast, M. *de Palise*, in order most certainly to give me an Opinion of his Parts, out-did himself in wistly Phrases, and was the first that approved them with a violent Horse Laugh; though I did not think them very entertaining, yet I laughed, but it was at the Ridiculousness of his Behaviour.

We were getting up from the Table when some-body knocked at the Door. Miss *Juliet* was ordered by her Mother to see who it was, not expecting any one at that Hour. She immediately returned and whispered Mrs. *Severin*. I guessed by her casting an Eye upon me, I was enquired for, which alarmed me. Make yourself easy, Miss, said my Neighbour (bidding *Juliet* desire the Person to walk in) it is a Woman, who says she comes from my Lady your Mother, and wants to speak with you.

I exulted in the greatest Transport at this News, and rose briskly up. Is it you, my dear *Seageon*, said I, as soon as I saw her?

Madam de St. Preuil is arrived at last then. How rejoiced shall I be to see her ! she will be the same, replied this Girl, who was my Mother's Woman and Confident ; and I cannot give you a better Proof of it, than by telling you my Errand ; her Coach is below, and she expects you with the utmost Impatience.

I did not hesitate a Moment what I had to do, but immediately took Leave of the Company. *Mrs. Severin*, seemed greatly troubled at my sudden Departure, which, she said, deprived her of an Acquaintance she greatly esteemed. As for Miss her Daughter, she fell a crying, for she had all at once conceived a great Friendship for me, and hoped she might be able to relieve me in my Embarrassments ; then, eagerly squeezing my Hand, begged I would give her an Opportunity of speaking to me, having many Things to tell me ; as she said this aside, that her Mother might not hear, I only returned her Squeeze by the Hand. As for *M. de la Palise* he offered to wait on me Home, because he said it was late, and he could defend me from Insults. In spite of all I could say, he insisted upon waiting on me, but finding at the Door of my Apartment three tall Footmen of my Mother's, in their Liveries, with Flambeaux, he was silenced at once, and putting on a very respectful Air, retired with *Mrs. Severin* and her

her Family, as soon as they had seen me into my own Door.

Though I was exceedingly impatient to see my Mother, yet I wanted to have a little Talk with *Seaugeon* before we got into the Coach. The first Thing I enquired about, was *M. de St. Preuil's* Health. He is at his last Gasp, said she, and earnestly desires to see you. I left by his Bed-side, my Lady and the Marquis *de Sherling*, his best Friend. I was not sorry to have such powerful Advocates about the Man I had so much Reason to dread at the final Disposal of his Affairs; but, as my Mother's Woman said nothing farther, I judged she had informed me all she knew of the Matter, and therefore asked her no more Questions.

When we arrived at the Hotel, we found it shut, contrary to Custom. I tremble, cry'd *Seaugeon*, for Fear what was expected has happened since I left the House to enquire for you; every Thing seems to foretel some dire Disaster. She was not mistaken. We were obliged to wait near a Quarter of an Hour at the Gate, which confirmed our Suspicions; when it opened, I conceived, by the dismal Countenance of the Porter, it must be so, which we were convinced of at the Stair-foot; there, every Thing resounded with Sighs and Tears. Whatever just Cause I had to complain of *M. de St. Preuil*, this

general Mourning moved my Compassion; and made me weep.

My Mother, was no sooner informed of my Arrival, but she ordered me to be conducted into her Apartment, and sent Word she would follow me, as soon as she conveniently could. I there found M. *de St. Preuil's* two Sons, who, the Moment they saw me, notwithstanding their Grief, threw themselves about my Neck, crying, O my Sister, my dear Sister, how rejoiced we are to see you again! I returned their Caresses very sincerely, apprehending, from this tender Welcome, M. *de St. Preuil's* Rage and Resentment had not provoked him so far, as to betray my Secret to them, which touched me very sensibly, and made me weep in good Earnest.

My Brothers inform'd me (I may venture to call them by that Name, since with respect to me they were not changed) when M. *de St. Preuil* was told of my Asylum, he desired the Marquis *de Sberling* would immediately order me to be sent for; that in a very little Space of Time he fell delirious. My Mother afterwards told me, Providence acted in my Favour on this Occasion; that he was very impatient at not seeing me, began to grow passionate, and to fall off from those good Dispositions my Mother and the Marquis *de Sberling* had inspired him with towards me; which nothing perhaps
could

could have brought about again, not even the Sight of me; for that possibly might have made him still more afraid of dying. In short, they attributed his Weakness to his Impatience. The Moment before he raved and swore at the Physicians, who attended him, saying, he had feed them well, and expected they would have done their Duty better.

I shall now return to the two young Gentlemen. One was sixteen, and the other fifteen Years of Age. The eldest, was very well made, had a noble Mien, and such an easy Complaisance, as gained him the Love of every Body. He went into the Army at fourteen, and made two Campaigns as a Captain; and, if *M. de St. Preuil* had lived, he would have been promoted to a Regiment before the End of the Winter. The youngest, who was called *de St. Clair*, would have nothing to do with the Church, though his Father had threatened him violently; all they could prevail upon him to do, was only to take the Cross of *Malta*, and he was very careful not to proceed any farther. He was vain, artful, and foolishly fond of Women; in every other Respect, honourable and disinterested, with an excellent Heart. He was my Mother's Favourite, because he knew how to caress her; and she could accommodate herself to his Humour, much better than to the eldest, who was, in her

Opinion, too serious and too prudent for his Age. *St. Clair* was very well made, considering his not being tall, and had a very good Air for one of his Size.

Our Conversation turned upon *M. de St. Preuil's* Death, for which the eldest seemed inconsolable, but the youngest was not so much afflicted. My Tears are dried up, said he; Heaven has left us a charming Mother to comfort us for our Loss, who will not, I am persuaded, oblige me to declare my Vows of *Malta* against my Inclination. It required all my Prudence, and a Share of my Concern for the Death of *M. de St. Preuil*, to make me forbear laughing. My eldest Brother took him up very sharply, and, to mortify *St. Clair*, said gravely, such a Father as they had lost, knew how to make a younger Son obey him, even after he was dead. This was Matter of Debate till my Mother appeared. I flew into her Arms the Moment I saw her, but found myself seized with so many different Agitations, I could not utter four Words coherently. I threw my Arms about her Knees; she raised me up, embracing me with all the Marks of infinite Tenderness, holding me by the Hand, as if she wanted to tell me, the Presence of my Brothers restrained her from shewing more pathetic Tokens of her Affection. She was supported by her Father and the Marquis *de Skerling*, who made me
a most

a most respectful Bow, and with such a Look, as I might have easily unriddled, had I been a little more experienced in the World.

As soon as *Madam de St. Preuil* was seated in an Easy-chair, which the two young Gentlemen drew for her, they threw themselves at her Feet and mingled their Tears with her's. As for *St. Clair*, he did not continue long in that Posture, but presently rose up, saying, now he had satisfied his Sorrow, it was necessary to hearken to the Call of Nature; that he had been ready to despair for the Loss of his Father; but it would be still worse, to endanger the precious Days of his dear Mamma, who had only supped a little Broth for the whole Day, and we should therefore, all of us, endeavour to prevail upon her to take some Refreshment, that she might be the better enabled to support her Spirits in those cruel Moments. My Mother was not displeased with that tender Regard the little Cavalier shewed for her, declaring, she believed any Thing but a little Tea would be ready to choke her. Not to trouble you with a Detail of Things which would be no ways amusing, I shall only tell you, the *Messieurs de St. Preuils*, after giving us their Company for about half an Hour longer, made their Compliments and retired:

When they had left us, we found ourselves under no Restraint before the *Marquis de Sberling*, whose Sentiments I was no Stranger

to. I cast myself at my Mother's Knees, kissing her Hands, saying every Thing the most extravagant Tenderness could suggest to me. Then you always loved me, my dear Child, said Madam *de St. Preuil*, hugging me in her Arms; and I find you what I could wish? Go! continued she, looking at me with a fixed Attention, you have cost me many a Tear; but no more of that at present. In the first Place, thank the Marquis *de Sberling*; we owe him every Thing; without his Assistance, you had wanted Bread, and I perhaps, might have found myself under the fatal Necessity of sending you from me. I shall inform you, the first convenient Opportunity, the important Services he has done us with my Husband. However, not to keep you in doubtful Suspence, know, M. *de St. Preuil* has, by his Will, made me absolute Mistress of augmenting the Fortune of that Child who shall most deserve it; which makes in your Favour, there being no Clause against you.

After having renewed my affectionate Caresses to my Mother, I next paid my Acknowledgments to the Marquis *de Sberling*, in the most obliging Terms. Miss, said he, I claim nothing; Heaven has been your Protector, in Reward of your Virtue; and this Day restored a Mother, after whom you have so often sighed; and I congratulate you upon it, as the greatest Felicity that

that could possibly happen; it is to her Tenderneſs, and preſſing Sollicitations, you are entirely indebted. I need not exhort you to be grateful; I am certain, you are too well bred, ever to be wanting in that Particular.

This Compliment, laid both Mother and Daughter under freſh Obligations of returning our politeſt Acknowledgments. The Marquis behaved like a great Man in high Life, and with the ſincereſt Friendſhip at the ſame Time. However, as it would be tireſome to dwell always on the ſame Subject, a Motion was made about our Buſineſs for the next Day, which I ſhall paſs over, to inform you, my Mother, according to the Cuſtom of the Country, retired into a Convent, whither I accompanied her. The Marquis had the ſole Direction of the Funeral, and undertook likewiſe to be Guardian of the Houſe, along with my Brothers; they loved and eſteemed him as much as the late *M. de St. Preuil* did, who, from the firſt Moment of his Acquaintance, always re-poſed in him the ſtricteſt Confidence.

End of the third Part.

P A R T.

P A R T IV.

WHEN we were fixed in the Apartments, which had been bespoke for my Mother at *St. Chaumont*, to pass a customary Retirement of six Weeks, as is usual on such Occasions, we talked over at our Leisure all our Affairs with more Freedom. My Mother, insisted upon my giving her a punctual Relation of every Thing which happened to me from the Time of her Departure for *Provence*, reminding me, of the extreme Confidence she had used in what regarded me, which, she said, ought to make me banish all false Modesty, all idle Scruples, having herself set me an Example. Besides, added she, you must look upon me, my Child, as an affectionate Friend, who lives for you alone, whose whole Employment is for your Welfare. I replied, as I ought, to these affecting Marks of her Goodness, and promised her all the Sincerity she could expect or desire from a Child possessed with the truest Sense of Gratitude.

I punctually performed my Promise; I did not omit any one single Circumstance of all that had befallen me. She did not seem much surprized at the late *M. de St. Preuil's* Conduct,

Conduct, with regard to me, she knew him well. But, on the contrary, when I entered into a Detail of the Abbot *Trainasseau's* Artifices, at each Period she interrupted me, to shew her Astonishment, and vent her Resentment. The Names of wicked, Cheat, and Wretch, was the Chorus, which terminated every Reflection. My Mother's great Spirit, when her Mind was worked upon by Prejudice, exaggerated every Thing, even to Excess. I no sooner informed her of my Conference with Father R and the high Opinion I conceived of his Prudence and Ability, but she cry'd, I have heard him spoke of as a Director in the highest Esteem, and the most respected of any, and, as I am entirely disengaged, I will have no other for the future. She added, as I intended waiting upon him again with my Jewels, she would accompany me, because, she thought it might be a favourable Opportunity of getting acquainted with him.

When I had given my Mother a satisfactory Answer to all her Questions, she told me, since the Death of M. *de St. Preuil*, a Thought was come into her Head, with respect to the Disposal of her late Husband's Effects, which would secure a lasting Tranquility both to herself and me that nothing could disturb. Hear me, my Child, continued she, I will communicate my Design, that
you

you may give me your Opinion, which probably may help to improve my Scheme.

M. de St. Preuil, has left a real Estate of sixty thousand Livers *per Annum*, a very good House, extremely well furnished; his Plate is valued at thirty thousand crowns, and I reckon the rest of the Furniture, together with the Equipage, Horses, Wardrobe, &c. are worth near as much. I have told you already, he has made me Mistress of all by his Will. His Regard for me was such, he has given me an absolute Power of disposing of his Children's Fortunes as I please. I will not abuse it; but, on the contrary, and in order effectually to prevent you and I ever being troubled with the Law, I shall dispose every Thing in such a Manner, as to make a perpetual Peace in the Family; and the Way I intend to bring it about, is this. As soon as I am put in Possession, I design to have an exact Inventory taken of what my Husband left at his Death; when all Things are properly regulated, I will send for your Brothers, and some of their Relations. After having informed them the Business I sent for them about, I shall order three Lots to be made, as equally as possibly can, as well of the Estate, as ready Money, Furniture, &c. and then desire your eldest Brother to chuse first, your youngest next, and what remains I will take, declaring at the same Time, it is for us both; and
you

you, having consented to this Disposal, are to inherit it after my Death. I don't know, my dear Child, continued my Mother, looking earnestly at me, if you are so sensible as I am how agreeable this Disposition ought to be to us all. Mess. *de St. Preuils*, you must needs imagine, will be over-joy'd on many Accounts. Do you consider the Pleasure they will have in being independent at their Age, to enjoy their Fortunes, to have no Sort of Contest or Dispute with any Body? With regard to these Advantages, they are entirely in their Favour. If I was such a Mother, as there are many in the World, would not their Hazard be very great? I have, in Right of my Dower, a Claim to a hundred thousand Livres, my Rings and Jewels are worth fifty-thousand, which makes together fifty thousand Crowns, and this I might legally take out of the Capital To-morrow. My Children cannot call me to an Account till they are twenty-five. I can make an eldest Brother of which I please. I would not think of that, because, I promised M. *de St. Preuil* on his Death-bed, not to injure either of them, and I will perform my Promise to a Tittle. I might lawfully make use of the Advantages that are given me by Marriage, but that I shall leave to vulgar Minds. To lay my Children under Obligations, and to exact Acknowledgments

judgments of Gratitude from them, is to me a mean Way of thinking.

I could not help being startled at this Project. My Mother I found intended to secure me a Fortune, and be Mistress of it herself for Life, without wounding her Conscience by certain Scruples and Delicacies. But, said I to her, after I had testified my great Admiration, there are two Things in this Disposition which perplex me. The first is, to know if *Messieurs de St. Preuils*, who are not yet of Age, can fulfil so important a Contract; the second is, if the eldest will be content with a third Part, being possibly of Opinion, he may one Day stand a Chance of coming in for the Whole. I could mention a third Objection, which concerns yourself personally, but I would not propose that, till you have taken the Trouble to resolve me about the two first, which seem of Importance enough to require your particular Attention.

My dear *Agnes*, you discover a great deal of good Sense, replied *Madam de St. Preuil*; and to answer you methodically, I must first observe, if you are ignorant of it (as it is possible, since our Confinement in the Convent) that your Brothers are emancipated. Besides, when I spoke of my Scheme, you may remember, I said, I would assemble their Relations as the most regular and open Way of proceeding. In the next Place, with

with regard to *M. de St. Preuil*, I cannot see what Reason he will have to be dissatisfied. He is the eldest, it is true, but, according to the Manner of my Marriage, he can have no Advantage over his younger Brother. The Will is against him, and *St. Clair* has not pronounced his Vows. Have I made a good Answer to your Objections? But let us see, continued my Mother, embracing me tenderly, what you think so nearly concerns me, I will venture a Wager, whatever it be, your Love has suggested it. Very true, my dear Mother, replied I, eagerly kissing her Hands, for I am not able to comprehend, how you could form a Project, by which the Manner of Living you have been accustomed to so long, must of Necessity be prodigiously retrenched. You are greatly mistaken, my dear Child, replied *Madam de St. Preuil* again. Are you under the same Mistake so many People are in, who make themselves miserable all their Lives to maintain an outside Show, always attended with a great Expence, and never contributing the least Tittle to that Happiness and Content, we ought to propose to ourselves, as the sole essential Object of all our Actions? See the *Comte de . . .* who in order to impose upon the Vulgar (for I believe, he has more Sense, than to imagine he can impose upon People of a superior Class) spends his Life in finding out Expedients

dients how to live, while he might, perhaps, have been one of the happiest Mortals in *Paris*, if he would have kept within Bounds, and discharged an unprofitable Train, which occasions him a daily Increase of Persecutors. I could quote you twenty Examples as bad. Go! my dear Child! it is not a grand Figure will make us happy; on the contrary, it very often serves only to confuse us, and draws us into such inconvenient Acquaintance, as we cannot decently get shut of; and deprives us of a thousand agreeable Pleasures, which we cannot procure without discarding this unavailing ridiculous Outside.

Notwithstanding what I have said, continued my Mother, I would not have you imagine, I design to push my Retrenchment to an Excess; no, my Child! you shall see after I have distributed two thirds of what my Husband hath left me in Possession, I will still retain a handsom Equipage; I will only turn off a Steward, a Maitre-d'Hôtel, and one Footman, which would be useless; I shall keep the rest; and you shall see, my dear *Agnes*, we will nevertheless, save something at the Year's End; and it may be something, wherewith to divert us, if we have a Fancy for it. I found what my Mother said was seemingly very reasonable, yet I could not persuade myself, that after she had disposed of so much of her Treasure, she would have sufficient left to live in
the

the Manner she had now described to me. Madam *de St. Preuil*, perceiving I entertained some Doubts about this Matter, soon proved to me, they were not well-grounded. She computed the real Estate at sixty thousand Livers a Year, without reckoning the Plate and Jewels, which were not thrown into the Lump; by her Scheme, she would have twenty thousand Livers Rent her Part, a third of the Plate would be ten thousand Crowns, and near one hundred thousand Livers worth of Jewels, she intended to turn into Cash, as well as her useless Plate and Furniture; all which, according to her Calculation, would produce a Revenue of thirty thousand Livers *per Annum*, with which, she made it appear, she should be in a Condition to live according to the Plan she had sketched out to me, and that very commodiously. Are you sensible, my dear Child, continued she (after she had demonstrated and made her Scheme very clear) how agreeable the Life will be we are going to lead together? We will hire a handsome House, with a Garden, and not be solicitous about the Rent of it, so much as the Situation; to have it at a Distance from any Place much in Vogue, we shall be more our own Mistresses, and not be pestered with such Company as perhaps we don't like. We will go now-and-then to the Opera, and to every new Play; we will read all the ingenious

ingenious new Books that are published, and converse with such People of Parts as are agreeable to our Taste. Without making grand Entertainments, I will provide, fans Ceremony, a Table for such as I like. In Summer, we will go into the Country, if it is our Inclination, and when we grow weary of it, will return to laugh in the *Tuilleries*, and the *Elisian Fields*, to get rid of those tiresome Women one meets every where, and are seldom contented any where.

This Conversation, would perhaps have lasted much longer, as it was very soothing to my Mother, but *Saugeon* came to tell us, the Lady Abbess desired Leave to pay her Respects. We were obliged to change our Tone, as well as our Discourse, and enter upon some-thing more proper to our melancholy Situation. My Mother gave herself an Air of great Affliction, and did it so naturally, it would have been very difficult for me to have imitated: People in high Life, are accustomed to put on such a Countenance, as they think necessary to wear on certain Occasions. For my Part, I had never as yet studied this Art. I cast my Eyes upon *Madam de St. Preuil*, in Hopes of modelling my Looks a little by her's.

I should here, according to the Custom of those curious Writers, who amuse us with Trifles, give your Highness a Description of this Superior, if the making her known

known to you had been necessary to illustrate my History; but, as it is the only Time, you will hear any-thing about her, I shall say nothing more concerning this Visit, than that it was a very dull one, and seemed long and tiresome.

Madam *de St. Preuil's* Calculations were greatly within Compass, for they found above a hundred thousand Livers of ready Money, which she never reckoned, and no Debts to pay.

Eight Days after we left the Convent, my Mother was put into Possession of the whole Effects, without any Trouble. She now only waited for a proper Opportunity to execute the Design she communicated to me; but before she assembled, M. *de St. Preuil's* Relations thought it adviseable to consult the Marquis *de Sherling*. Besides the Objections I had offered, he added, in his Opinion, a Mother ought never to put it in her Childrens Power to treat her with Neglect; that, according to her Plan, she might expect they would shew their Independency. My Mother answered, for that very Reason she intended to persist in her Resolution, as the only Means of knowing if she was really beloved; her Children, being no longer biassed by Interest, she should be as sensible of the Care they took to please her, as she should be indifferent to them, if she perceived their Disregard.

Her

Her Scheme was too well resolved on ever to think of altering it. Young as my Brothers were, they gave on this Occasion, the truest Marks of a good Heart. They did all in their Power to engage my Mother to continue in the Enjoyment of the whole Fortune; but knowing it would disoblige her to persist in thwarting her Intentions, they accepted, with great Respect, as well as Gratitude, a Disposition, so greatly to their Advantage; declaring very sincerely, it would be a main Article towards their Promotion in the World, as it put them in a Condition to do what was necessary for their Advancement, *M. de St. Preuil's* Behaviour on this Occasion, was incomparable. He thanked my Mother for making an equal Distribution, protesting, he was greatly delighted at what was done for his Brother; that he should have acted in the same Manner had it been in his Power, having always thought, the Custom of making younger Brothers dependent, a very ridiculous Thing; they must be made miserable, said he, to raise the Fortune of the eldest, who very often deserves it least.

These Sentiments of *M. de St. Preuil*, discovered such noble Principles in him, it drew from my Mother a thousand Caresses, as well as the general Applause of the whole Family; but she and I had very soon still greater Reason to be surprized. After the

two Brothers had talked together apart for a few Moments, they came up to my Mother, and told her, they did not perceive, in the Disposition she had made, any Thing at present for me; and therefore, they agreed each of them to give me fifty-thousand Livres as a Portion, in case an agreeable Match should offer.

It was now my Business to shew my Generosity, by excusing myself from accepting this noble Present, made with so good a Grace, representing to them, at the same Time, how perfectly well satisfied I was with my Lot's being the same as my Mother's. Nothing I could say had any Influence, they were unalterable in their Resolution; I therefore consented to accept it, fearing to disoblige them by any further Refusal. They appeared as pleasingly affected with the Favour they did me, as if it was a real Good, Fortune had bestowed on them.

The whole Family were entertained with a grand Supper, which terminated this extraordinary Scene. From that Day, my Brothers and I conceived such a tender Friendship for each other, that it has continued the same to this Hour. My Mother applauded us for it daily, and has often told me, if all Fathers and Mothers behaved in the like Manner, Families would be more united than they generally are.

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During

During our Mourning, my Mother hired a very handsom House, near the *Cherche-Midi*, which, without being grand, contained three commodious Apartments, and a very large Garden. She embellished it to her own Taste, and went into it as soon as it was in Order.

Mess. *de St. Preuils*, would not separate, but continued to live in their paternal Mansion House. *St. Clair*, who had the best Heart in the World, was so entirely won by his elder Brother's Behaviour, he scorned to leave him, and was as complaisant, as if he had been reduced to the dependent Condition of a younger Brother. By-and-bye you will see, they did not content themselves with the simple Marks of Friendship only—but of that in its proper Place.

Till the Year of our Mourning was expired, the Marquis *de Sberling* came but seldom to see us; after we were settled in our new House, he visited us more frequently. It was not long, before I perceived he continued to have the same Views upon me, but as I took Care never to leave my Mother, without I was obliged to it, he could very seldom find an Opportunity of speaking to me. I plainly discovered by the Tenderness of his Regards, he had a great deal to say. I was now become a little wiser than when I first knew that Gentleman; the Communication I had with my Mother, opened my

my Mind insensibly ; besides those ingenious Productions I was daily reading, which unfold the Heart, learnt me to see clearer into my own, and to read other People's better. This Knowledge was no favourable Circumstance for the Marquis. After examining myself strictly about him, I found I only esteemed him ; which was not sufficient to make me relish his assiduous Devoirs. On the contrary, I no sooner perceived my own Indifference, but I avoided all Opportunities of being alone with him, and I always pretended not to comprehend, what he endeavoured so much to have me understand.

Madam *de St. Preuil* was too clear-sighted not to apprehend the Marquis's Views. She delayed for some Time speaking to me about it, but judging from my Behaviour I was indifferent, had undoubtedly a Mind to sound me ; and therefore told me one Day, it seemed to her, as if the Marquis shewed a very tender Regard for me. I could not help being greatly confused. Have you any Esteem for him, said she, laughing ? You blush in such a manner, I am apt to suspect you have. I vow, my dear Mamma, replied I, I am ignorant of the Matter. Do you dissemble at your Age, continued my Mother ? You must be very sensible, whether you love or whether you are indifferent. I remember very well, when I was about your Age, I could easily distinguish. However it be, I

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with

with my Conjectures may prove true, and that the Marquis *de Sberling* may love you well enough to marry you.

This Subject was dropt for the present, upon a Lady of the Neighbourhood's coming in, with whom we had contracted an Intimacy from our first entering our new House; and I was very glad she interrupted our Conference. Tho' I loved my Mother very much, I durst not yet behave to her with that Openness of Heart, in regard to what you will find hereafter. The Opinion I entertained at that Time of Madam *de St. Preuil's* Subtilty, put me always upon my Guard, especially when any Mention was made about certain private Sentiments, which many Mothers are glad to have their Daughters disclose. As soon as she put me upon some particular Articles, I always suspected she wanted to sift me, and that was sufficient to make me endeavour to evade.

I was, as I observed, relieved by a Visit from this Lady, with whom we had held a Correspondence for some little Time. She was called Madam *de Geneval*, the Widow of a Marechal de Camp, who was still comely, tho' not young, and very entertaining in her Conversation. She generally knew all the News that was stirring in *Paris*, and by certain little Nothings, had the Art of amusing one very agreeably. I took an infinite Liking to her, as we seemed to con-

spire

spire in our Sentiments, which was sufficient to make us very good Friends. Madam *de St. Preuil* often invited her to Dinner. This Attachment increased insensibly from Day to Day, and Madam *de Geneval* improved upon us greatly; the more she made herself known to us, the more we liked and loved her. Amongst a thousand other pleasant Things she told us at this Visit, she mentioned one Adventure, which brought the Abbot *Trainasseau* to my Mind, but not to his Advantage, for I had almost forgot him, and it gave me a Suspicion about the Jewels he returned me, as I have before related. Since the Death of M. *de St. Preuil*, my Mother had been so embarrassed with Business, we were obliged to postpone the Visit we agreed to make Father R. that impatience my Mother shewed at first to be acquainted with him, by little and little grew indifferent, and at last quite vanished. All the Year of our Mourning, I never once thought of my Diamonds; they were very fine, and no Opportunity had as yet offered to appear in the World with them. From whence (if I may be allowed the Expression) we were retired. My Jewels rested in the Box, and might have remained there some Time longer, without my thinking about them, if it had not been for the Adventure Madam *de Geneval* told us of; and

the Affair of my Jewels resembled too much what follows to be passed over in Silence.

The Count *de Tourbillac* having fallen in Love with two beautiful *English* Ladies, whose Affairs brought them to *Paris*, took all the Pains imaginable to scrape Acquaintance with them, which he at last accomplished in the *Palais-Royal*, where they went every Day to walk, as they lived in that Quarter, and it may be were often weary of Home. A Shower happening while they were in the Garden, gave him an Opportunity, he would by no Means lose, of shewing his Gallantry, and immediately ordered his Coachman to draw up to the Gate, and in a very Cavalier manner pressed them to accept of it. After some ceremonious Scruples, the two Beauties stepped into the Coach. During the little Time they were going so short a Way, he intreated very earnestly for Leave to visit them. They cut him off short at first, with their usual Excuse, of not seeing any Body. Nevertheless, as *Monf. Tourbillac's* Age was a Sort of Protection to the Reputation of the *Miss de Slairzannes* (which was the Name of these *English* Ladies) they granted his Request. It is no easy Matter to slight the Acquaintance of a Gentleman who keeps a Coach, and more especially when one has Business to transact, and stand in need of Friends. On Pretence of shewing his Politeness, *Monf. de Tourbillac*

billac handed the Ladies into their Apartment. He found out by this, they were Sisters, that they had a Law Suit depending at *Paris*, and should only stay till it was determined, and then return to *England*, from whence they were arrived but about two Months. Upon that Information, he made great Proffers of his Service; telling them, all his Friends had the highest Reputation in the Parliament, that he would solicit for them himself, and they might always command his Coach. They returned him many Thanks, and thus Things remained for this first Visit,

A few Days after, *Monf. de Tourbillac* came again to pay his Respects to these Beauties. The exquisite Whiteneſs of their Skins, which was not to be equalled in *Paris*, and the many Charms they were endowed with besides, made him very anxious, for Fear of being supplanted. After much Application, he found himself not at all advanced; it came into his Head, therefore, to try some more efficacious Scheme. He remarked, that the Miss *Slairzannes* were not very easy; he catch'd them often sighing, though not for him; at last with a good deal of Dexterity he sounded the Coast, and endeavoured to find out, if putting some rich Jewels into the Possession of these beautiful Fair-ones would not succeed better than

the gallant Speeches he had in vain thrown away upon them for four Months together.

One Day, as he was about to take his Leave, he cry'd out, I had like to have forgot an Affair of Consequence I was going about, to which he added a most flattering Compliment, as if he would have them to understand, he never thought of any Thing but them, while in their Company. Without giving the Ladies Time to reply, he drew out of his Pocket a small Ban-box, which contained a very fine Pearl Neck-lace, and a Cross with Branches of Diamonds. There's ten-thousand Crowns worth, said he, which I bought Yesterday of *Le Pape*; and promised to bring him the Money for them to Day. Though I am never so happy as in your Company, Ladies, I would not on any Account forfeit my Word; please to do me the Favour therefore to lay by these Jewels for me till To-morrow, because I shall spend the Evening abroad, and perhaps stay late, and one cannot foretel what may happen. The Miss *Stairzannes* absolutely refused taking Charge of them, advising him to carry them Home. After debating for some Time, *Tourbillac* was obliged to give up the Cause, without being displeased at it. The next Visit he made, he fancied himself better received than before, not doubting but the Sight of his Diamonds had greatly contributed to it. He ventured one Evening to
say,

say, he bought those Jewels on Purpose for a Present to them, not knowing how to declare it, for fear of giving Offence; but if they would accept of them, without further Ceremony, it was a Piece of Gallantry he should be very proud to perform. As Miss *de Slairzanne* thought at first he was only joking, she made a Jest of his Gallantry; the youngest, being more sprightly, told him, she was not to be duped so, and would venture a Wager, was she to take him at his Word, he would consider of it twice. *Monf. de Tourbillac*, imagining the Belles snapt at the Bait, in his Turn, defied them to do their worst, accept them if they dare. After a great deal of Altercation of this Sort; there's my Diamonds said he; and that you may be convinced I did not impose upon you, when I said they cost ten-thousand Crowns, let us go together to a Jeweller's, and if they are not worth that Money, I desire you would discard me for ever, and be assured, there is nothing could make me more unhappy.

The eldest Miss *de Slairzanne* had a Mind to answer him in her serious Way, and bid her Sister hold her Tongue, who was running on in the old Strain; but *Tourbillac*, insisted upon going to the Jeweller's, pretending his Honour was concerned. These Ladies, either through Complaisance, or perhaps because they wanted to be better

satisfied, consented. Three Jewellers agreed in the Beauty and Goodness of the Jewels, and all of them were of Opinion also, and declared, they would produce within a hundred-Pistoles of their prime Cost.

After *Tourbillac* had brought these Ladies home again, he proposed a Supper to them, which was rejected. The eldest reproached her Sister a second Time for being so giddy-headed, and laid the Blame upon her, who begged Pardon, promising never to behave so any more; after which, the eldest took upon her to read *Mons. de Tourbillac* a long Lecture upon Honour and Reputation; this he thought was treating him with Contempt, and was so piqued at it, he out of Spite left off visiting them.

About fifteen Days after, meeting them one Evening in the Palais-Royal, he could not help making them a respectful Bow *en passant*; they reproached him for not calling upon them in so long a Time; he excused himself, as a Man of no Consequence, unwilling to trouble Ladies with his idle Visits. From one Word to another, they gave him at last to understand, if they could depend upon his Discretion, they should be glad to see him again. The Chevalier, judging from hence, that his Absence had forwarded his Project, put on a modest Assurance; and said, Will you permit me to talk to you without a Riddle? In short, the finest Woman, this Day

Day in *Paris*, is now ready to take the Diamonds you have refused; though the Business is concluded, and I have promised to sup with her to Night, nevertheless, if you will accept them, I shall make no Scruple of disappointing her. Miss *Slairzanne* paused a while, but, perceiving the cunning *Tourbillac* was preparing to leave them, asked if he had the Diamonds about him. No, said he, they are at my Lodgings, but I'll go fetch them; I suppose I shall find you here, and you may be considering in the mean Time, how they shall be disposed of.

They wanted no further Explanation. When he returned about a Quarter of an Hour after, they got into his Coach without any Scruple, supp'd with him, and the Diamonds were delivered. The Story does not discover to which of them, that is still a Mystery. But it is certain, the Ladies were in some Distress, and went the next Day to a Lapidaries, who promised to buy them at a hundred Pistoles Loss. After an Examination, he rejected them, as being false. These unfortunate Girls thought this Man out of his Senses, and went to two others, who returned the same Answers, owning at the same Time, that they were extremely well imitated. Frighted to the last Degree, and suspecting the Truth of the Adventure, they go again to other Jewellers. What could they say more? They

were convinced of their being Dupes to *Mons. de Tourbillac*. It is probable, they would endeavour for an Opportunity to be revenged. In Spite of all their Secrecy, on both Sides, the Story has got Wind; but the most cruel Thing, is, that this dishonest Man (for can one call him by any other Name) has ruined the Reputation of these poor Girls who lived in good Repute before, but are now often pointed at, and perhaps may be obliged, sooner or later, to confirm the bad Opinion the World have of their Virtue. This is the Substance of the Story, as *Madam de Geneval* related it, excepting the many witty Turns and sprightly Sallies she threw in to embellish it, which I am but too conscious I have not the Art to imitate. This Adventure struck me. I cast an Eye on my Mother, who understood perfectly well what I meant. However, as *Madam de Geneval* was by, we said nothing, but deferred satisfying ourselves to a proper Opportunity. We sat down to a Party at Quadrille with the *Marquis de Sberling*, who came in very *à propos*, and after Cards went to Supper, and made a very gay Repast of it; our new Friend, was not wanting in sprightly Turns, and the *Marquis*, though in Love, was not behind Hand. At Twelve, the *Marquis* waited upon *Madam de Geneval* home. As soon as my Mother and I were alone, we began to chat; and it will be no difficult

difficult Matter to guess at our Discourse. My Mother sent me to fetch my Jewels, and having examined them very attentively, she was of Opinion, they were not mine, and that certainly, notwithstanding the Proof which I sustained were made of them before my own Eyes, they must undoubtedly be changed, and I was the Abbot's Dupe a second Time. The better to clear up this Point, Madam *de St. Preuil* made me repeat the Transaction. When she found, I did not receive the Diamonds again, the Moment the Jeweller had declared them to be good, she never doubted in the least, but the Abbot, in getting into the Coach, had certainly substituted some Counterfeits, that were made for that Purpose, in the room of them. Prepossessed with this Opinion, which I thought a very probable one, she assured me, she would the very next Day be satisfied, and bid me therefore, as soon as I was stirring in the Morning, dress myself, intending to have them examined by the best Judges; and if she had a just Foundation for her Suspicion, she would take an effectual Method, to oblige that Villain of a Priest to make Satisfaction. Not to trouble you with more Circumstances, which would only tire your Patience, let it suffice that I tell you, in short, the Diamonds proved to be false. The Marquis *de Sberling*, who was advised with upon this Occasion, undertook

to have them examined by the best Judges, and to make Satisfaction to the Marquis *de Sberling*.

to attack Abbot *Trainasseau*. It became a very serious Affair. He denied the Fact, and threatened in his Turn, if Things were pushed any further, he would make such Discoveries, we should for ever repent our having troubled him. The Marquis, without seeming to regard these Bravados (though at the Bottom, fear'd the Rogue was capable of doing what he said) swore, if he dare be so wicked to reveal the Secrets committed to him on the Confessional Seat, he would himself be his Aceuser, and have him burnt. In short, he found out the Secret of terrifying him in such a Manner, that the false Devout was confounded. The Marquis perceived it, and kept him under till he had humbled him so, he brought him to his Purpose. In fine, he made him return Part of the Jewels, the rest being disposed of, for which he obliged him to pay ten thousand Livers down upon the Nail.

However well satisfied my Mother was with the Turn this Affair had taken, she could not help owning to the Marquis, she was afraid the Abbot would sooner or later endeavour to find an Opportunity to be revenged. The Marquis assured us, he durst not attempt it, having put the Rascal into so fine a Panic, he would never dare to have a Dispute with him again.

This Business thus concluded, I found myself easier than I had ever been, and began to think of my having neglected returning

turning Thanks to Heaven, as a good Christian ought, and thought I should give my Mother much Pleasure, by reminding her of the great Impatience she shewed to be known to Father R But, how astonished was I, when she told me, I need only take my Woman to accompany me! her Opinion about that Matter was changed. As she had been a Dupe to the Abbot *Trainasseau*, she did not think of having another appointed Director, that she was undeceived, and would henceforward take her Chance for one, being most agreeable to her present Way of thinking, intending to be independent for the future, she would not put it in the Power of any ill-natured Priest to be her Governor.

I did not then know *Madam de St. Preuil* well enough not to be greatly surprized at so prodigious a Change. My Amazement was so apparent she discovered it. Don't imagine Daughter, said she, that I have no Religion left, that would be doing me Injustice; but it is your Adventure has given me so great a Disgust to these fashionable Directors, I have taken a Resolution to have nothing to do with any one of that Fraternity while I live. They are in general very inquisitive People; they take upon them to govern Families, to pry into all their Secrets, which when they have once discovered, they play the Tyrant; nothing is to be transacted
without

without their Advice, or more properly without their Permission. I am still so frightened with the Abbot *Trainasseau's* Threats, I cannot help retaining a very strong Resentment. Time, which destroys all Things, may perhaps wear it away; but be that as it may, my Resolution is unalterable. With regard to you, be your own Mistress, act as you please, nothing ought to be freer than Conscience; and I am very certain, had I less Love for you, I never could put a Restraint upon your's. Nevertheless, if you would think seriously, and credit what I say, you may not judge amiss in following my Example, and by that Means, it is possible, avoid a great deal of Chagrin.

Though I was very sensible, much might have been said by Way of Answer to all *Madam de St. Preuil* now advanced, I feigned myself of her Opinion, but the Sentiments of my Heart were always the same; for, as in the Disorders of the Body, a Physician, who knows our Constitution, is preferable to a Stranger; so a Director we are accustomed to is much more capable of prescribing a Remedy for our Errors, than he that is unacquainted with our Heart. My Mother seemed extremely well satisfied, imagining she had brought me over to her Opinion. After Dinner, my Mother's Attorney coming in about Business, I was left alone with the *Marquis de Sberling*, who had sighed too long

long for such an Opportunity not to improve it. Miss, said he, drawing as near as possible, permit me to make Use of this Opportunity, I have been wishing for more than twelve Months, only to enquire how your Heart stands affected towards me; for, be assured, you are the absolute Mistress of mine. I shall never forget, Sir, the Obligations I am under to you, replied I, smiling; I always was, and ever shall be, very sensible of their Value; and you cannot doubt my ever retaining a most grateful Remembrance of them. Ah Miss! interrupted the Marquis, you talk to me of Gratitude, when I am speaking to you of Love! I esteem it a great Happiness to have had it in my Power to prove my Attachment; and if my Assistance has been of any Service, I shall think myself amply rewarded. But it is not worth naming, and therefore, if you please, we will say no more about it. May I, from the most assiduous Application, dictated by the sincerest Passion, hope to arrive one Day, at the Happiness of pleasing you? That Miss, is my only Aim, added the Marquis, with a most languishing Air. Though my Tongue has never mentioned it before, my Eyes have declared it a thousand Times. May I hope, you are not displeased with my Passion? Will you condescend to explain yourself? On your Reply my Happiness depends.

I found

I found myself greatly embarrassed by so peremptory a Declaration. I was very sensible of the great Regard I ought to have for the Marquis *de Sberling*, on Account of the many Obligations I owed him. To flatter him with Hopes, would make him more pressing than ever; besides, I knew not how to dissemble, and he understood the World too well to be long imposed upon, by my affecting to speak a Language foreign from my Heart. To tell him plainly, I could not partake of his Love, would not that abandon him to Despair? Since he so absolutely assured me, upon my Answer depended his Repose. I therefore took the only Method I thought could prevent the engaging myself. I am so entirely ignorant, reply'd I, how to discourse on such Sort of Proposals, that I find it very difficult to give you a reasonable Answer. You know better than any Body, Sir, that I have never been in the World. You talk to me a Language, of which I am perfectly ignorant. I know nothing more of Love than the Name; and shall endeavour, to continue unacquainted with its Influence so long as I live. I have been told a thousand Times how dangerous it is, and the Pleasures it procures are mixed with so much Gall that . . . Beautiful *Agnes*, you have not been imposed upon, reply'd the Marquis with great Vivacity, should you resign up your Heart to an unworthy Lover,

Lover, void of Tenderness and Sincerity, it would be such a misguided Passion, as often makes Life miserable; but when founded on Esteem, and the Motives proceed from Reason, Honour, and every agreeable Requisite, what charming Transports does it not bestow! it brings such real Satisfaction, no anxious Cares can disturb its Joys, all is Rapture and Delight; you are conducted into such a State of true Felicity, as nothing is capable of altering, when Virtue crowns the Fire which Love has kindled.

The Arrival of Mess. *de St. Preuils*, who came to see my Mother, happily interrupted a Conversation, which began to make me very uneasy. They immediately fell into a rallying Strain, upon surprizing us *Tete-a-tete*. *St. Clair*, who was very sprightly, said to his Brother, I'll wager with you, before six Months are passed, we shall be obliged to make the Marquis *de Sberling* and my Sister the Compliment of a handsom Present. Indeed reply'd M. *de St. Preuil*, for my own Part, I shall be heartily glad to do it; and I, cry'd the Marquis, (embracing first one, and then the other) shall joyfully accept it, I swear from the Bottom of my Soul; to which, my little Sister, said *St. Clair*, will answer with all Humility, Heaven's will be done. Yes, reply'd I, in every Thing that may not occasion my being separated from my Mother. Nothing could be

be better answered, Sister, added *M. de St. Preuil*, I admire you for it much ; my Mother may be left, but then Matters may be so contrived, and the Marquis has too good an Understanding not to know how. This Conversation was interrupted by a Footman, who came to inform *Mess. de St. Preuil*, my Mother wanted to speak with them. *St. Clair*, pinching me by the Arm, as he was going out, mischievously told me, when he returned he should make me chatter. I answered him in the same Stile, telling him, I should put his Curiosity on the Stretch, and he would not so easily find me out, as he imagined.

The Marquis, who began to think, was he to behave in a more jocular merry Strain, it might succeed better with me than in Sentiments perhaps too serious for one of my Age, said, he knew an admirable Way to punish *St. Clair* for his Rallery. I gave so little Attention to him, reply'd I, that I know no better Method than not to mind him. No, let us seem to be very much upon our Guard, continued the Marquis, and he will fancy he has carryed his Point, and got the Advantage ; then, to provoke him, I will make a mighty serious Affair of every Thing he has advanced, that he shall be very doubtful what to think of the Matter. One wink of the Eye to *Madam de St. Preuil* will do the Business ; she undoubtedly will take

take the Hint, upon which, I shall amuse her with such Discourse, as will make them imagine our Marriage concluded, and that we have nothing further to consider of, but when, and where. Though such a Supposition was no real Joy to me, I could not help thinking the Marquis's Scheme might prove entertaining; and as I never imagined what would be the Consequence, I was the first to support the Supposition by a Behaviour which confirmed it. The Marquis play'd his Part so well, and I seconded it in such a Manner, *St. Clair* was taken in. Madam, cry'd he, directing his Discourse to my Mother, I can never forgive you. What truly! my Sister is on the Brinks of Matrimony, and it has been kept private from us to this Moment. I am very much provoked. I don't know what my Brother thinks of the Matter, but for my own Part, was I convinced of the Fact, that little jade should go without my wedding Compliment. With Respect to the Marquis *de Sberling*, that's another Affair; he certainly ought not to reveal a Secret that was to be concealed from us; I should have behaved in the same Manner in his Place; and to convince him I speak as I think, I embrace him withal my Heart, desiring, when he is my Brother-in-Law, to preserve the same Sentiments he always honoured me with while he was my Friend.

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M. *de St. Preuil*, being of a more serious Turn, required better Proofs of the Matter before he explained himself. *St. Clair's* Vivacity gave me such Pleasure, I was willing to see the Comedy out, and by answering with a timorous Air, and making many evasive Excuses, they were at last both caught in the same Trap. Madam *de St. Preuil*, perceiving how much this Scene amused me, and finding it herself very diverting, took my Part, pretending she had certain good Reasons for keeping this Business a Secret, and positively forbad me speaking of it, till her Attorney had settled some Difficulties which embarrassed the Contract. To conclude, Mess. *de St. Preuil* were now convinced; but, instead of complaining that we dealt unfriendly by them on this Occasion, they behaved very respectfully to my Mother, and to me like good Brothers, assuring us, nothing could make them capable of being wanting in any Thing that regarded either her or me. My Mother, who was greatly moved with these Proofs of their Tendernefs and Respect, embraced them both with great Affection, telling them, the Marquis and I contrived this Pleasantry, to extricate ourselves from the Embarrassment they had thrown us into. What, my little Sister! cry'd *St. Clair*, is it thus you banter your dear Brothers; very well, Miss, I will this Instant contrive a Way to punish you.

you. Believe me, my dear Mother, Miss *de St. Preuil* shall have no Reason to brag of her having trepanned us ; I think we here present have sufficient Power to make or marr this Marriage ; and if the Marquis consents, that this Rallery shall turn to Reality. If I consent ! interrupted the Marquis in a Transport, I would give the World to have it accomplished. O by all Means said *St. Clair* ; if that's the Case, my Mother has nothing to do but say the Word. I give my Consent withal my Heart, reply'd *Madam de St. Preuil* very seriously. I have always had a very great Esteem for the Marquis ; he knows it, and if any Thing concerns me in this Affair, it is my Daughter's not having Fortune enough. The Marquis reply'd like a Man over-head-and-ears in Love. For my Part, I, who till this Moment had been amused with the Thing as a Matter of Joke, began to be greatly perplexed. No sooner did *St. Clair* perceive it, but he returned to the Charge, protesting, he was over-joyed at having contributed to my Happiness.

My Mother, who believed the Trouble I appeared to be in proceeded from a Consciousness of having dissembled with her, in regard to the Inclination she thought I had for the Marquis *de Sherling*, with a friendly Smile, said, she was going to give me a substantial Proof of her Tenderness. After she
had

had said this, taking the Marquis's hand, she conducted him into her Closet.

By what I can perceive, cry'd *M. de St. Preuil*, placing himself down by me, as *St. Clair* had already done, here is an Affair ready to be consummated. I know *Madam de St. Preuil* is of a Disposition not to let it remain long in Hand. Well! I am charmed with it, you could not be better married, either for Birth or Fortune. The Marquis *de Sberling* enjoys an Estate in Land of twenty-thousand Livers a Year; his two Uncles will bequeath him as much at their Death; he possesses six-thousand from the Crown, and is on the Point of being made a General Officer. If we had picked out a Man on purpose, we could not have found a better. As to his Character, the Marquis is adored; he is generous, beneficent, and of so amiable a Turn, he acquires new Friends daily. The Court and Ministry will have him promoted, as well as the General Officers, who make a Point of it. What may he not expect? For my Part, I am enchanted with his Declaration. Indeed, I suspected something from his great Assiduity, but I never flattered myself the Business was so far advanced; nor can I tell yet how to reconcile Matters. As for me, cry'd *St. Clair*, I never doubted it; did we ever come without finding the Marquis here? And I have observed a hundred Times, such languishing Looks, as con-
vinced

vinced me, it must be Love. If my Sister will honestly own the Truth, I'll venture a Wager, she has known it a good while. See, Brother, she reddens; does not that convince you? Can one have a surer Token? I am afraid, Gentlemen, replied I, being more and more concerned, it is dangerous to offend ye; you won't slip any Opportunity of Revenge; and I could take mine, by letting you remain in your Error; but I love ye too well to dispute any longer; pray let us finish this Foolery: I tremble, to think it has been pushed so far, and I heartily repent, that I ever gave any Room for it. What, Sister! interrupted *M. de St. Preuil*, are we to question it seriously. Behold, cry'd *St. Clair*, bursting forth into a violent Laugh, she is determined to keep up the Joke to the last. No, my dear Brother, interrupted I eagerly, I am very far from having any Thoughts of Matrimony; I protest solemnly, I have an extreme Repugnance to it; and since I must declare it, I have made a Vow to continue single all my Life. Very good, reply'd *M. de St. Preuil*, it will be no difficult Matter to dissolve that Vow. I hope you have too good an Understanding to refuse the present Offer. In short, whether you have a Mind to laugh or not, it is certain, the Marquis has demanded you in proper Form. But you speak so very seriously, I must believe you; however, do not

deceive yourself; Things are gone farther than you imagine; and I will venture any Wager, my Mother is now actually settling the Affair of your Marriage. If so, how will you dare to contradict her, and refuse a Man of the Marquis *de Sberling's* Distinction, who is our Friend, a Person you like so well, and approved of the Proposal before us all? You will, I suppose make your Excuse, by saying, it was in Jest; but don't flatter yourself, my dear Sister, with the Hopes of coming off so. It happens every Day, that the most serious Transactions proceed from previous Accidents, but perhaps not so well founded as this; and the most important Things, are often begun in Jest. *M. de St. Preuil*, said I, weeping, you are enough to distract one, for Heaven's Sake, go into my Mother's Closet, whisper her in the Ear to do nothing rashly; if you don't contrive some Means to put a Stop to this Marriage, I shall be the most miserable Creature living. You, who have hitherto shewed me all imaginable Kindness, will not, surely, now contribute to my Unhappiness. I had too sorrowful a Look, not to convince my Brothers of my Sincerity. *St. Clair*, who was exceeding fond of me, left off the rallying Strain he had carried on till now, to shew his Concern for having been the Cause of this Adventure. But, I don't see, continued he, how we can prevent it. I am of my Brother's

Brother's Opinion, if my Mother has fixed every Thing, it will be next to an Impossibility to make her alter her Resolution. The Respect we owe the Marquis *de Sberling*, will cut us off short; we cannot pretend to speak to him; all we can do, provided my Brother thinks it adviseable, is, to talk with Madam *de St. Preuil*. I consent to it, with all my Heart; reply'd my eldest Brother, musing, but I very much fear, it will signify nothing. Hark ye me, cry'd *St. Clair*, I have thought of an Expedient. The Marquis *de Sberling* is a Man of strict Honour, and to all Appearance perfectly adores my Sister; let her talk to him apart, but not provoke him by an absolute Refusal; only desire to defer it for a Year or two to determine herself. That will be giving him such hopes, as he will readily agree to, for fear of disoblighing her; and leave the rest to Time. At this Instant the Marquis and my Mother appeared again. We have settled every Thing, said she, with an Air of great Satisfaction; and I'll venture any Wa-ger ye will all be pleased. I told the Marquis, the Concern it would be to part with my Daughter, and he was so complaisant to propose living with us; we have therefore agreed to hire the next House, and a Communication may very easily be opened between that and this, which will make it very

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commodious, in so much, we shall be like one and the same Family.

While my Mother was entering into all the Particulars of this Disposition, the Marquis, perceiving the Tears were in my Eyes, changed his Place very eagerly, and came to ask me, what could occasion the Chagrin he saw in my Countenance. Feeling myself oppressed with the Weight of my Grief, and ashamed to let it burst out, I rose up, telling him, I was indisposed, and had an Inclination to take a Turn into the Garden. He followed me; there is some Mystery, Miss, in this sudden Indisposition, said he; shall I be so unhappy as not to have you a Partner of my Joy, or are you concerned at those favourable Dispositions towards the Completion of my Happiness? Shall I be deceived, Miss, continued he, struck with my Silence; have I flattered myself in vain? Pray answer me, I cannot longer remain thus cruelly in Suspence. In short, if you have any Repugnance to the making me happy, own it with your usual Sincerity. My Love is too delicate, ever to give you Cause to reproach me for abusing your Confidence, or to have any Thing to apprehend from my Behaviour. This Declaration was a great Relief to my Anxiety. I determined therefore to take the Advantage of this favourable Opportunity, and explain myself without any Equivocation. Indeed, Sir, said I, I am frightened

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at the Thoughts of Matrimony; and if I go to the Altar, it will be greatly against my Inclination. The Reasons for my desiring to defer it, is, what I dare say you cannot enter into. I have already told you, I know no other Sentiments but those of Esteem; and I will add farther, you are he, of all Mankind, for whom I have the greatest. I am as sensible as I can be of the Honour you intended me, and find myself greatly mortified in not being so grateful as I ought. Give me Time to do you the Justice I owe you; perhaps, in a few Years, when I have more Understanding, I may make such a Return as is due to your Goodness. I understand you, Miss, interrupted the Marquis, with a pensive Look, this is tantalising me with a distant Hope, only to get rid of a troublesome Lover, whom you hate. No, Sir, reply'd I, very quick. I am greatly moved at the Uneasiness I give a Gentleman, so worthy to be beloved. I do not hate, but on the contrary, feel a most tender Friendship for you, and I am in great Doubt, whether that Love, you have so often mentioned to me, is susceptible of any other Sentiments. If I am mistaken, and you will take the Trouble to instruct me better, I protest I shall not take it amiss.

This Answer was so flattering to the Marquis's Hopes, he thanked me with as much Transport, as if I had given him an absolute

Promise, or declared I began to love him. He attempted indeed to renew his former Addresses; but, upon my remonstrating to him, that his kind Complaisance, on this Occasion, persuaded me much more than all his Protestations, he promised to wait as long as I pleased, provided I would confirm his Hopes, and give my Word never to be another's. As I had nothing in my Head at this Time could occasion my objecting to an Engagement of that Sort; I gave him my Promise, with that Air of Sincerity, he readily believed me. His Countenance was now quite serene, and he said such obliging Things, as convinced me, not only of his Love, but his highest Regard.

As we were returning back down the Walk, *Madam de St. Preuil* and my Brothers came to meet us. I judged by their examining Looks, they were endeavouring to read our Resolutions. Both the Marquis and myself, appearing more easy than before we went into the Garden; they at once imagined, I had hearkened to Reason, and that the Marquis now triumphed over all my Objections. *Mess. de St. Preuil* were very impatient to know what had passed. They no sooner saw my Mother turn down another Alley along with the Marquis, but they began to question me. I related to them very sincerely our whole Conference. They wished me Joy, but nevertheless always blamed

blamed me, for slighting a Business of such Consequence, and not knowing my own Interest better. They afterwards told me, their Conjectures proved true; for I had no sooner left them, but they began to dispute about my Marriage, which threw my Mother into a violent Passion, and upon their advising her to do nothing precipitately, she down right quarrelled with them, imagining they had some private Motives for opposing such a Match as, she said, I should never have again. This Report would have made me excessively uneasy, had not the Marquis consented to my Proposal; but I knew him too well to question his being wanting to me on any Account. Whilst we were talking, my Musick Master appeared. Though I was in no Humour for singing, I would not send him away. He was recommended to us by *Madam de Genneval*, for whom I began to have a very great Friendship; besides, he lived at a Distance, and I was scrupulous about making him lose his Labour.

I shall break off awhile, my Princess, to make you acquainted with this Musician. I know very well, droll Pictures amuse you; besides, you will meet with him again in some of these Adventures, where I have a part. *M. de Beimolet* was one of the most celebrated Masters in *Paris*; People of the greatest Distinction had their Children taught by him. His Profession brought him in

above one hundred and fifty thousand Livres annually, besides Presents and Christmas-boxes, which enabled him to keep a very handsom Equipage, and to be always in good Tune.

Before I give you any Account of his Way of thinking (which is so singular he has not his Fellow) I shall describe his Figure. He was low in Stature, very lean, and mounted on two Legs like an Ostrich; his Head was a sharp Oval; his Eyes were large; and the Brightness of that curious Piece of Carved-work, his Face; but, their perpetual Languish was all in all, which made him seem passionately in Love with every Object, whatever they were, which presented. His Eye-brows were two Semi-Circles, whose parallel Thickness appeared as if marked out by a Compass. His Nose occupied almost one third of his Countenance, it was large, - thick and turned up with a Sort of fleshy Excressences, that formed a kind of Entablature; his two Nostrils were carved like the Mosaic Windows of a Gothic Cathedral. His Mouth was small, there being but a very little Space for it; the extremity of his Visage was so sharp, it served as a Prop to the Cheeks, which, in spite of the Leanness we mentioned before, were high and round, his Under-lip and Chin were jumbled together and finished this curious Phiz. Whatever Art *M. de Beimolet* used to

to conceal as much as possible from the Eyes of the Public his vast Forehead, it looked to be three Times larger than the rest of his Face. Being sensible of this Defect in Point of Symmetry, and very jealous about his Dress, he commonly wore a Patch big enough, which resembled the Sun in a central Eclipse, and appeared like a little Ball in that stupendous canopy the Sky. I will not undertake to describe the rest of his Person, because it would ingross too much of your Time; I shall therefore proceed directly to his Mind; and, according to my Promise, acquaint you with his Ridiculousness.

His predominant Foible was, the imagining himself sprung from illustrious Blood, though all the World knew his Father was a Wheel-wright. He pretended his Mother was only his Nurse; and that some Time or other he should procure a certain Insight into the Grandeur of his Birth. The good Woman, before her Death, endeavoured to cure him of this Chimera, but all in vain.

This Vanity, proved in some Measure of Service to him, and pushed him on to become so eminent as he was, for, (according to the high Opinion he conceived of himself) he thought it a great Indignity to associate with his Inferiors. He had like one Day to have thrown himself out of his own Window. A Farmer General, who wanted to have his Daughter learn to sing, being acci-

dentally at a Place, over against where *Beimolet* lived, went to him, and desired he would come the Day following to his House, and give his Daughter a Lesson. Before agreeing upon any Thing, *M. de Beimolet*, asked who the Scholar was that he proposed? My Daughter, reply'd the Farmer General. That is not the Question, Sir, answered the Musician; is she a Person of Condition? How's this! interrupted the Financier, must she prove her Nobility before she learns to sing? No certainly, cry'd *Beimolet*, there are five hundred Masters in *Paris*, who are not so curious; but I, who understand who I am, don't care to demean myself by keeping scoundrel Company; and I go only to those whom I morally know to be of Quality. If that's the Case, continued the Farmer General, you certainly will not go to a Financier's. Heaven preserve me! interrupted *Beimolet*, be better informed, Sir, upon what Footing I am in the World, and you will find, I never have any Thing to do with such stupid Cits. The Farmer General was so offended at this insolent Answer, he was going to knock down *Beimolet*, who was no Paltroon, but directly clapped his Hand upon his Sword, and called his Servants. *M. le Financier*, for fear the Impertinence should be carried any farther, thought it most prudent to retire. But the merriest Part of the Story is, the Financier

is so piqued at the whole Profession, that notwithstanding his being very fond of Musick, he never since could endure to hear any; and though his Daughter has a very earnest Desire to learn, he cannot be persuaded to give his Consent.

To return again to my Musick Master, he had also the Madness to imagine, that many of his Scholars were secretly in Love with him. If accidentally in singing, any one of them cast an Eye towards him, he immediately construed it, as a private Inuendo; then would he sigh, and look confused, and if he was asked what ailed him, he generally answered by singing some little Opera Air, signifying his Heart was engaged, and that he piqued himself on his eternal Constancy.

Before Madam *de Genneval* recommended this Master to me, she informed us of his Frenzy, which my Mother disregarded, as it was no Impediment to his teaching me perfectly well, nor his having a very good Taste and being well respected; it served to entertain us now and then, by Way of Comedy, for, by treating him like a Man of Distinction, so infatuated him, and occasioned him to put on such lofty Airs, as sometimes greatly amused us.

My Mother coming in before my Lesson was finished, I rose up to receive her, and discharged my Musick Master, observing, at

the same Time, that her Countenance was more reserved than usual; I perceived too, with Concern, she avoided my Looks, and the Marquis endeavoured to catch them; from whence it was natural to conclude, they had been talking about me, and that I was not so much in Madam *de St. Preuil's* good Graces as I was in the Marquis *de Sberling's*, and might expect a Lecture from her when the Company were gone. This Notion was Matter of great Uneasiness, and made me wish heartily for Company, or that my Brothers would stay to Supper. I attempted to engage them, but unluckily they had an Appointment, and went presently after with the Marquis to a Rendezvous at the Opera.

We were now left alone. I was afraid to open the Scene. Madam *de St. Preuil* seem'd thoughtful, and as cold as Ice. I took some Muslin out of my Work-bag, with a Design to flower it, and employ my Eyes, the better to keep my Countenance; but my Mother, perceiving it, ordered me to lay my Work aside, for she wanted to talk with me. I directly imagined the Marriage was coming upon the Tapis again, which made me attend with Fear and Trembling.

Although she appeared to be irritated, she however softened the Tone of her Voice. You know, my Child, said she, how tenderly I have brought you up; I don't believe
there

there is a Mother in *Paris* has given a Daughter such convincing Proofs of her Love. I doubt not of your being thoroughly satisfied of it, whenever you reflect on the infinite Confidence I reposed in you. And in the last Place, the Disposition I made was entirely to serve you. How often have I trembled to think, that by those Events we could not possibly foresee, you had formerly no other View, but the melancholy Prospect of being shut up in a Cloister all your Life, for want of a Fortune? My Love prompted me to do more in your Favour than could have been desired or expected, witness an ample Portion settled by my Direction; with that, and the Addition your Brothers have made to it, I doubted not of marrying you very advantageously; but, I never flattered myself with the Hopes of finding a Man of the Marquis *de Sberling's* Distinction and Station in Life. It was very lucky your Retreat was discovered by him, who now offers you his Hand with that eager Desire, which testifies both his Love and Honour. Tell me, *Agnes*, your Reasons for refusing such an Establishment? Tell me, with an open Heart. Have you any private Engagement you would conceal from me? Or, do you feel an unreasonable Disgust to the Man of all the World most worthy to be beloved?

I thought,

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I thought, in so delicate a Situation, I ought not to dissemble. No Madam! answered I, far from having any Sort of Antipathy to the Marquis *de Sberling*, my Esteem for him is equal to his Merit; but I feel an invincible Aversion to Matrimony. I should think myself the happiest Creature alive, would you but permit me to spend my Days with you; I know no other real Good in this World, but that of loving you; never to be attached to any one else; to acknowledge no Superior but you; and this precious Liberty I hope Heaven will permit me to enjoy.

That's answered like a well-bred Child, who loves her Mother, reply'd Madam *de St. Preuil*, looking kindly upon me, and yet knows not her own Interest. I treasure up all these Tokens of your Tenderness for me, I promise you; but the more I acknowledge that, the more I should demonstrate mine. You are not capable of judging so well as I, the immense Advantages the Marriage in Question would procure. By contracting of it, you would be one of the happiest Women in all *Paris*; nothing could hinder our always living together; the Marquis has again confirmed his consenting to it. Call to Mind, my dear *Agnes*, those cruel Strokes I confided to you on the Subject of your Birth; I would not recal them, said she, to afflict you, observing my Eyes were

were ready to run over, but to make you sensible of the Necessity you ought to think yourself under, to embrace the present favourable Opportunity of procuring an absolute Protection. We may perhaps find the Wants of it. *Mess. de St. Preuil*, you are well withal To-day, you may'nt be so To-morrow. Nothing is so common in Life as such Sort of Ruptures. Should they be informed what you really are, and the wicked Schemes of that unworthy Abbot, what have you not to apprehend! If, I say, they should come to a Knowledge of your Condition, a Law-suit might deprive you of every Thing, even of your Name; and I have the Mortification to see my History exposed in the Proceedings. On the other Hand, you have it in your Power to be Marchioness of *Sberling*, and then all these Terrors would vanish; so powerful a Support will secure you against every Danger I have now laid open to your View, and if they should imagine they had just Reasons for giving you Trouble, the Fear of encountering with superior Strength, will restrain their Malignity, and force them to an eternal Silence.

My Mother was at this Part of her Expostulations (and I protest, they made so strong an Impression upon me, I found myself wavering) when a Footman came in, and said, there was a Gentleman, who would not tell his Name, desired to speak with her
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in private. Madam *de St. Preuil* sent away the Servant, chiding him for bringing a Message from an unknown Person; but immediately recall'd him, to ask what Sort of a Gentleman it was that wanted to see her. A tall Gentleman, answered the Footman, about fifty, or fifty-five Years of Age, with two Laquies, and a very fine Chariot, at the Door. Desire him to walk in, reply'd my Mother; there can be no Danger in admitting a Person that makes such an Appearance; it must certainly be some old Friend of M. *de St. Preuil's*, continued she, casting her Eye upon me; he has lent many Sums, without any Security; this Man is come to make Restitution; I shall be overjoy'd at it, added she, laughing, for this will be the first Time I ever received Money unexpectedly; if the Sum is considerable, we will augment our Plate; I want a Surcoat, made like that I let your Brothers have, which I should be glad to replace in this Manner. My Mother had scarcely finished these Words, when the unknown Gentleman appeared. Instead of coming up to us, he stopped at the Door. I desired, Madam (said he to my Mother) the Favour of speaking to you alone; will you permit me to wait upon you into your Closet; or tell me when I may speak to you apart? Madam *de St. Preuil*, wondering at so much Precaution, said, I was her Daughter, and she

He had nothing to hide from me. Notwithstanding that, Madam, reply'd this Man, whose Presence gave me an odd Sort of Concern, I have something to communicate, which ought to be told to you alone; after I have related it, you are at Liberty, to behave to Miss as you think proper; I shall have no Reason to reproach my own Prudence.

The Day began to decline apace, and being in a Saloon, upon a Level with the Garden, one could hardly see to the further End of it. My Mother, who began to be uneasy, gave me a Wink (which I understood) telling me, at the same Time, to order some Wax Candles into the Antichamber, which joined to the Room where the Servants kept. Being obliged to pass by the unknown Gentleman, I could not help catching his Looks, which were attentive upon mine; I attributed the strange Emotion I then felt, to Fear. Before I was three Steps out of the Saloon, my Ears were alarmed with a violent Shriek, which I knew to be my Mother's Voice, upon which, I entered hastily into the Room again, not considering about the Danger; but how great was my Astonishment, when I beheld the unknown Gentleman prostrate at the Feet of Madam *de St. Preuil*, who looked, as if she was fastened to the Spot, and yet there did not appear in her Countenance, either Fear,

Fear, or Trouble. She was seated in a Bergère near the Window, where we had still Light enough to discern Objects. I stopt short, not thinking my Mother in any Danger, but the Noise I made by returning in a Hurry, raised the Gentleman. My Mother, seeing me come back, asked if I had called any Body; upon my telling her I had not, and why I returned, so much the better, said she, shut the Door, and come hither; you certainly do not expect the interesting News I am going to tell you.

When I was come up to her, she asked me if I knew the Cavalier before me? In examining, as a Person does when they are endeavouring to recollect a Face they have forgot, I felt the same Emotion I was agitated with in passing by him. I cannot immediately recollect, reply'd I, addresssing myself to Madam *de St. Preuil*, who the Gentleman resembles; and yet, I am perfectly well acquainted with his Features; and wonder myself I cannot recal his Name. But, *Agnes*, continued my Mother, does your Heart tell you nothing this Instant? Ah Madam! cry'd I, that Word's enough, it is the Marquis *de Breville*. Yes, my dear Child, cry'd he, hugging me in his Arms, it is a Father who loves you, and who has for a long Time been excessively impatient, not only to tell you so, but to give you convincing Proofs of it. While he was saying this,

this, his Arms were embracing me in the tenderest Manner, and I felt my Cheeks bathed with his Tears. For my own Part, such sweet Delight was diffused all over me, as I never tasted before. I found myself in that Moment happier a thousand Times than I had ever been in all my Life.

Madam *de St. Preuil*, who was fearful some of the Servants might surprize us, desired the Marquis *de Breville* would forbear a little those engaging Transports (which gave us all so much joy) till Candles were brought. We went into my Mother's Closet, as soon as they were lighted; and the Servants were ordered not to suffer any Body to disturb us; and, for more Security, she herself bolted the Door.

Now we are in no Danger of being disturbed, said Madam *de St. Preuil* to the Marquis *de Breville*, be so good to entertain us with every Thing that has happened to you since our cruel Separation. Alas! had it been permitted me to have enquired after you, be assured, I should not have been thus ignorant; but you will know, by an Accident which befel me, after sending the fatal Letter I was obliged to write you, the Impossibility I found myself under of stirring one Step further. You have cost me many a Tear, continued my Mother, embracing him, while I, perhaps, was entirely out of your Thoughts. It will be no difficult Matter

Matter to convince you of that Mistake; reply'd the Marquis *de Breville*, tenderly kissing her Hand. The sincere Account I am now going to relate, of the Life I have led, since that cruel Message I received, by which I was forbid seeing you any more, will sufficiently prove my Constancy, and the Prey I have been to Grief and Affliction, from the fatal Moment I was obliged to separate myself from you. When he had said this, he embraced us both, first one and then the other, with great Eagerness, and very feelingly, and afterwards entertained us in the following Manner, addressing his Discourse to *Madam de St. Preuil*, and often casting a wishful Look at me.

I will not paint the extreme Melancholy I was plunged into after our Separation, which seized upon me to such a Degree, I never stirred out of my Chamber for eight Days, incapable of determining what Course to take. Twenty Times I resolved to see you again, and to use my utmost Endeavours to prevail upon you to let me enjoy the Pleasure of your Company now-and-then; but when I reflected, I should by that Means risk the exposing your Reputation and Quiet, I moderated these Transports. At last, unable to live in that Part of the World where you resided, without seeking Opportunities to talk to you of my Love, I at once took a Resolution to remove myself far off, and
to

to make the Distance between us so wide, it should be impossible for me to break the Promise I made at parting, never to appear before your Eyes again, so long as it was your Duty to oppose my Vows.

I had no sooner determined on this Project, but I considered what Method I should take to execute it. Amongst the many Ideas my Despair suggested, how to hazard a Life that was become a Burthen to me, since I was no longer permitted to see you, I recollected, that an Uncle of mine had been Governor of *St. Domingo*, who died there after acquiring a large Fortune. I resolved therefore to ask the Court for a Government in the *Indies*; they imagined, my not being rich made me request that Employment, for the Improvement of my Finances. My Family, as you know, are People of great Interest, attributing this resolute Application for a Thing which Despair alone prompted me to solicit, stirred so in it, I was, about three Months after, appointed Governor of *Pondicberry*.

My Mother, who was then alive, and greatly rejoiced at this Piece of good Fortune, undertook to prepare every Necessary for my Departure; and a Steward, who had lived with my late Father, desired to accompany me, and have the Care of my Effects, otherwise, I should have gone to my Government, with but a very slender Equipage,
neither

neither should I have returned so rich. I shall not trouble you with a Detail of the many Perils I went through in so long a Voyage. Contrary Winds, and tempestuous Weather, kept me four Months longer upon my Passage than I ought to have been. I was so entirely lost in Sorrow, I should not have known we were going ashore, but for the Shouts the Sailors made, according to Custom; so absolutely insensible was I of every Thing. Upon my Arrival at Pondicherry, I appeared quite overwhelmed with Melancholy; in so much, that all the World imagined I regretted my native Country, and seemed, as they thought, in Despair on Account of my leaving it. The Hopes of sinking under my Grief, was some Consolation to me. I did not pass a Day without shedding Tears, and condemning the Rigour of my Fate, that had robbed me of a Happiness, which would not have been in the Possession of my too happy Rival, but for his superior Affluence.

One Day, in particular, when I had afflicted myself more than ordinary on this cruel Consideration, my Secretary, I mentioned before as the Steward, who for three Years together persecuted me to take his Accounts, now absolutely insisted upon my settling them with him. I thought to put him off with the same Ease I used to do; but he declared, if I would not hear him, he

he should take his Measures accordingly, and would have nothing more to do with my Affairs. I asked, what were the Reasons that induced him to be so pressing. His answer was, he had Sums of Consequence belonging to me in his Hands, and having a fair Prospect of making a very great Advantage of them, he would not venture to embark without my Consent.

My Spirits were so benumbed with a constant Melancholy, I never once thought of my Fortune, but by a sudden Notion happening to strike me, which regarded my Love, I was at once rouzed from that long lethargic State of Stupidity. I recall'd to Mind the last Letter I received from you, in which, I was informed of the Birth of my dear Daughter, and the just Motives that obliged you never to see me more: Though that fatal Remembrance renewed the Cause of my Affliction, it made me sensible at the same Time, I ought not to continue an unprofitable Father; and in Case of Misfortunes, the indispensable Obligation I was under of recompensing my Daughter to the utmost of my Power, for the Defect of her Birth. This Reflection impressed me so strongly, I listened to what my Secretary had to say, with Regard to my Interest. It was not the Business of one, but at least ten Days, I was forced to spend in passing his Accounts. Nor did I repent my Trouble;
for

for he made it plainly appear, he had, from my first coming to my Government, found out the Secret of gaubing me two hundred-thousand Livers. Being thoroughly satisfied of his indefatigable Care, and to engage him to continue it with the same Fidelity, I interested him to prosecute his intended Enterprize, by a large Present, to encourage him to double his Diligence, and gave him also Carte Blanché, to act as he thought proper. I had no Reason to be sorry for vesting him with that Power, as you will find in the Sequel of this Recital. Till that Time I was very indifferent whether any of my Relations in *France* were dead or alive. The Idea of getting some Intelligence of your welfare haunted me so, I directly contrived a Correspondence for that Purpose. Being now perfectly easy in my Circumstances, so as to be able to do as I pleased, I settled a Salary upon a Vallet-de-Chambre, who had lived with me some Time, without saving any Thing; and I could depend upon his Fidelity; this Man I sent to *Paris* with my Commissions. In order to conceal my main Design from him, I intermixed your Name, amongst many more of my Acquaintance, that nothing particular might appear in the Orders I gave him, to send me a punctual Account of them all, and to inform me from time to time of their Circumstances and Situation. It was by this Canal, con-

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tinued my dear Father, I learnt the Death of *M. de St. Preuil*. She is then free, cry'd I, with great Transport, and I may hope to see her again! O Heavens! may I flatter myself with the pleasing Thoughts of enjoying that Happiness? I was so transported with this Idea, I sent immediately for my Steward, and ordered him to look out for a Vessel that was ready to sail, pretending, Business of the utmost Consequence called me to *Paris*. As I had just received a Packet, no-body was surprized at the sudden Preparations for my Departure. Notwithstanding my great Eagerness, I was obliged to wait three Months longer, because no Ship could be ready before that Time.

During that Interval, my Secretary brought me an Account of the Augmentation made to my Riches, by many successful Ventures, amounting in the whole to One million two hundred thousand Livres; besides a Plantation purchased for me in the best Part of the World, worth almost as much. I felt an excessive Joy at the Knowledge of this. I may then hope to see again her whom I adore, said I to myself, and shall have it in my Power to make her happy. O Fortune! heretofore so cruel, do you now cease to persecute me? Grant me, O Heaven! continued I, a Sight of that dear Daughter, whose Birth has caused me so much Bitterness of Heart; may she live to inherit those

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Riches you have vouchsafed to heap upon me.

I quitted *Pondicherry* with these joyful Reflections. Whatever Precautions were given me, to make the Voyage seem less tedious, I thought it was everlasting, and that I should never see the End. In short, my Impatience was so extravagant, I found, when we came to l'Orient, my Health greatly impaired. It was impossible to proceed any farther; a Fever, which seized me at Sea, became more violent after I disembarked. In my Delirium I talked of nothing but you, Madam, and it was very lucky no-body attended me but those who had an Affection for me, otherwise all my Secrets might have been betrayed.

However, what the Physicians prescribed, instead of diminishing, augmented my Fever to such a Degree, that I was in great Danger of being cast away in Port, as they say. My Secretary, who durst not oppose the Doctors Directions, undertook (as soon as the Coast was clear) to manage me his own Way. His Zeal had so happy an Effect, in four Days after, the Fever left me, and nothing remained but a tedious Weakness, which proceeded more from Fasting, and the Medicines I had taken, than from my Distemper; by little and little, with Care and good Jelly Broth, I was restored. My Impatience to be at *Paris* returned with my Strength. The Intendant consented to my going, on Condition
I would

I would perform the Journey in a Litter. Whatever Ardour I shewed to be as expeditious as possible, I was obliged to submit to his Zeal and the Justness of his Reasons. In fine, I arrived in Town Yesterday; and, what I look upon as a great Miracle, am perfectly recovered. My first Care, upon my Arrival, was, to get Intelligence where you lived. It gave me a secret Pleasure, to find you in a House of your own. But it was impossible for me to discover if the young Lady they told me of was this dear Child, whose Preservation I so ardently pray'd for. My coming at this Hour, and keeping up the Incognito so long, proceeded from an earnest Desire of being my own Informer.

My Mother's Gratitude found too many flattering Motives in this Recital, not to indulge her Joy, at seeing again so faithful and tender a Lover. Though my Father was past his Prime, he preserved so much Agreeableness, had so genteel an Air, and was so well-shaped, a younger Woman than *Madam de St. Preuil*, might have liked him. I was not the least surprized at her resuming her former Tenderness; she had good Reason to forget him while her Husband lived; Time, and her Duty, also conspired in Aid to her Virtue. But he returned at a critical Time, at the Beginning of a dismal Widowhood, more fond, and it may be, more

amorous than ever. Is it strange, that the Fire of Love should be kindled again, or that she could not be offended with one who came so far to comfort her for the Loss of a Husband, whom, perhaps, she never loved.

As soon as the first Transports of my Mother's Gratitude were explained, my respectable Father desired she would, in her Turn, relate the Chagrin she had endured on his Account. This she could not perform without shedding fresh Tears. The Marquis *de Breville*, as you will easily imagine, pressed her to dry them up. Let us talk no more of Sorrows and Misfortunes, said he, when she had done speaking, since we are brought together by a most happy Destiny. Let us endeavour to retrieve our past Mistake, and do the only Thing that can atone for it. Since your Prudence, continued my dear Father, kissing my Mother's Hand, has prevented that Discovery, which would have been so mortifying to our lovely Daughter, I sincerely think, we cannot, without a Crime, without offending against the Laws of Nature, refuse or even defer (as we have it in our Power) to perform a certain Ceremony for her Sake. It certainly was decreed by Providence you should be free, by putting us in a Capacity of repairing our former Irregularities. I never would marry, whatever Instances my Family have caused to be made to me, since the Noise
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my Fortune has occasioned. Let us therefore fulfil the Obligations due to Love and Constancy, and enjoy with Tranquillity, the Riches Heaven has been pleased to bless me with.

This Proposal, which Madam *de St. Preuil* might naturally expect, did nevertheless surprise her. It threw her into a profound Thought. If I consulted only my Heart, said she, breaking Silence, I should most certainly instantly embrace this fresh Proof you give me, of a most perfect constant Love. But, dear Marquis, added she, tenderly squeezing his Hand, how can I, on so delicate an Occasion, satisfy my Inclination and Desire? Shall I not be accountable, in the Eyes of the World, for a Marriage, which will seem to every Body, so very extraordinary? It is well known I loved you before I married M. *de St. Preuil*. That despair you demonstrated during the Separation, was no less a Secret, than the Challenge you sent your Rival, who procured you to be put under Arrest, whilst I, in the mean Time, was dragged to the Altar by an imperious Mother, who forced my Consent with a Poniard in her Hand. I grant, the many Years that are passed since, our Adventure ought to be forgot. But, have not we Reason to apprehend, when your Passion and mine comes to be talked of, we

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shall not give Room for Malice to exert itself again at our Expence.

Alas! what have we to do with the World, Madam, reply'd the Marquis, being attentive to my Mother till she had finished? What! shall we, for the Sake of such an idle Consideration, be so inconsiderate, to postpone a Happiness; after which (if I may depend upon the Vows and Protestations you made before your Marriage) you have sighed for as much as myself? What, because impertinent People, who have nothing else to do, may possibly amuse themselves, with our renewing our Loves (for I ought to make use of no other Phrase) we must have the Inhumanity to defer the settling our Daughter's Fortune, as her's is not real at present? Ah Madam! that very Circumstance alone should make you despise all those chimerical Fears. Only give yourself the Trouble to cast your Eyes upon the Anecdotes of those Times; you will find such frivolous Discourse very little to be regarded. We have seen, the Count *de Carmisan* marry his Washer-woman. When our Ladies of Quality heard it first mentioned, they said, it was so scandalous an Action, all the Nobility ought to shut their Doors against her. Before one Year was expired, my Lord and my Lady were in every Party, and every Body was striving who should shew them the greatest Civility. The Marquis *de Sorbalet*,

balet, was still worse treated by the Public, because he took his Wife again after he had confined her, on Pretence of her having had a Design to poison him. The same People shew him no less Respect than they do the Count *de Carmisan*. After six Months were passed, not a Word more was said about it. If you've a Mind, I will mention another Instance you cannot be ignorant of, and that is, the Affair of Mr. and Mrs. *de Montgemel*, who were at Law for four Years together, which was carried on with all the Fury of two exasperated Enemies, to destroy each other. Madam *de Montgemel* sued for a Separation, and fill'd her Pleadings with Facts, which were more mortifying the one than the other, even to the accusing and endeavouring to prove him guilty of a Crime, Decency will not suffer me to name. Her Husband, by way of Recrimination, or it may be justly, related such Facts in the Conduct of Madam *de Montgemel*, as rendered her an Object of Horror and Detestation, even in the Eyes of those, who do not pique themselves so much on any Delicacy of Reputation. What was the Consequence? M. *de Montgemel* gained his Cause, and obtained above, a *Lettre de Cachette*, to confine his Wife in a Convent. His Resentment was raised to such a Pitch, he accompanied the Officer appointed to take her up. *Montgemel* had got over to his Interest, a *Valet-de-Chambre*

Chambre of *Madam de Montgemel's*, who introduced them at Break of Day into her Bed-chamber, without any Noise. When he drew back the Curtain, how great was his Surprise! to find his Wife in the Arms of her Gallant. Instead of executing the Warrant he had given himself the Trouble to bring, he vented his Rage in Reproaches, and play'd the jealous Husband very prettily; and while he was thus giving a Loose to his Fury, in the most upbraiding Terms his Resentment could invent, the Lover made his Escape. *Madam de Montgemel*, at the Sight of her Husband so early, the Attendants that accompanied him, and being threatened with the Misery of an Arrest, jumpt out of Bed, and threw herself at his Feet. What shall I say more? Those Charms she the Moment before lavished upon a Traitor, who robb'd him of his Honour, surprize and captivate him. His rage subsides, he receives her into his Arms and forgives her, he forgets all that is past, and as a Seal to the Peace which is concluded, sends away the Officer, and suffers himself to fall into the Embraces of a Woman, who had attempted every Art to ruin him, and but the Minute before, dishonoured him in the Sight of his own Eyes.

My Mother and I could not help bursting forth into a violent Laugh at the Conclusion of this History; because we knew very well the

the Personages he last mentioned did not associate with the better Sort of People, and that they were not much regarded, however it put an End to Madam *de St. Preuil's* Irresolutions. As it is necessary in Affairs of this Consequence, to consider seriously what Measures are proper to be taken, the Marquis *de Breville*, who thought it a Matter of Prudence, was the first in consenting to a Delay, which my Mother insisted upon, and to say no more about it, till they should all meet at her House at a certain Hour; and it was also agreed, to receive him by a feigned Name.

End of the first Volume, and the fourth Book.

